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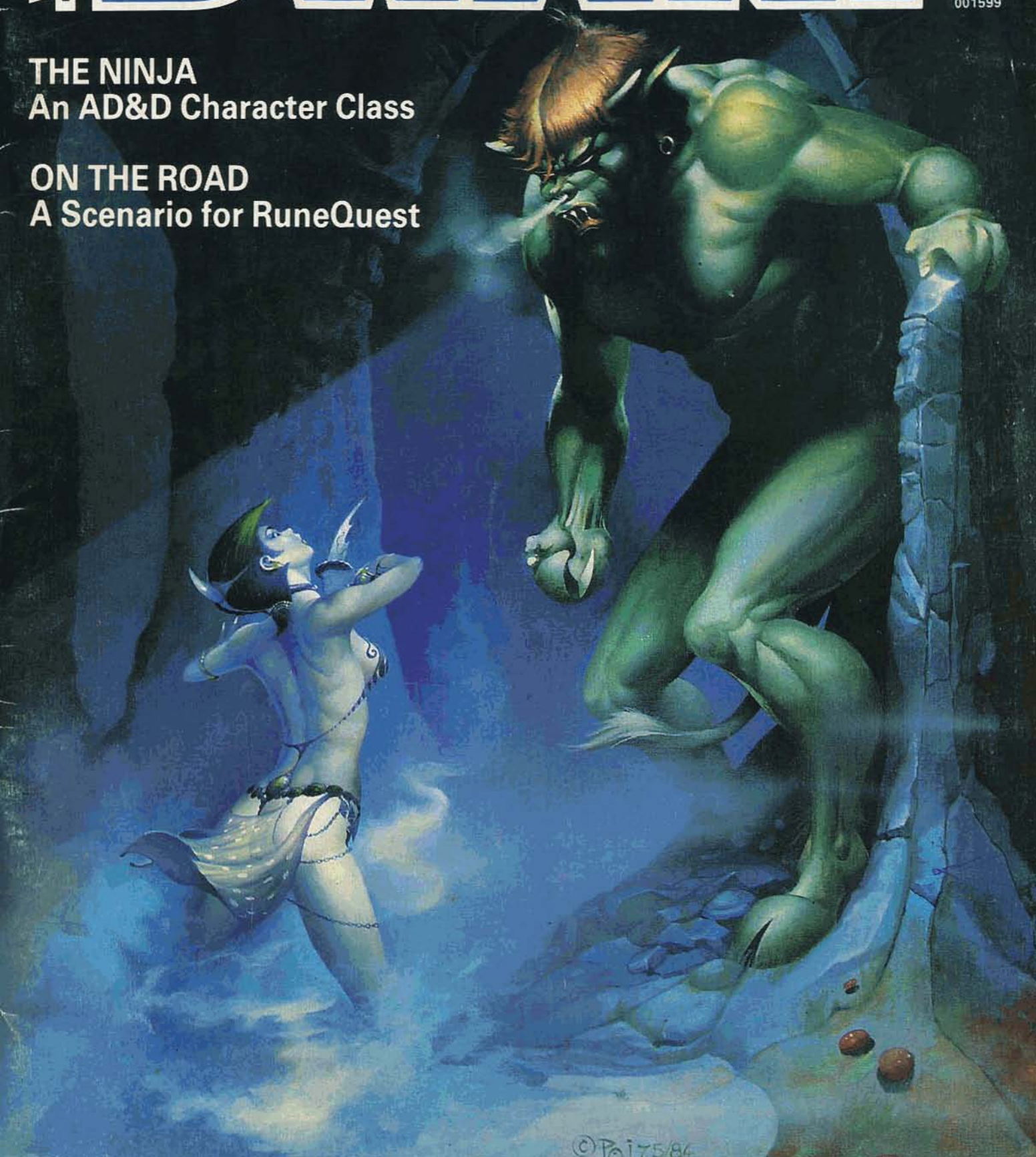
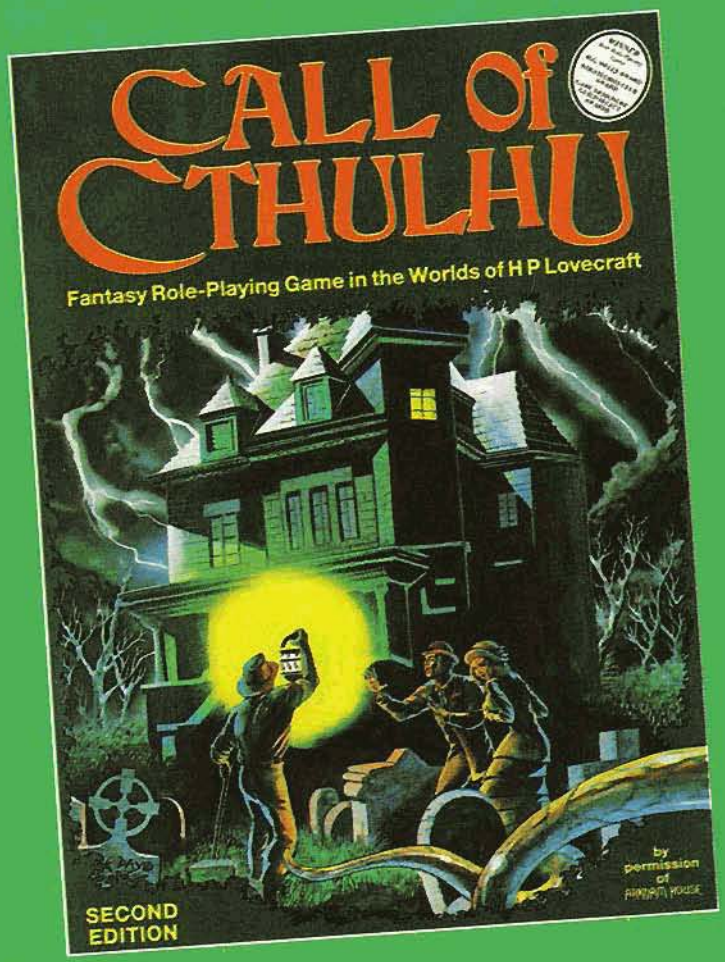


In Call of Cthulhu even librarians get bitten by the Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua



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57-22-38-41 HACK !

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Agaroth has been developing a new explosive to be used in his famous cross-park 'Bombs', and Auntie Maggie's tea-cakes have already given us a substantial saving on padding and armour !

So whilst all you lily-livered man-things are safely indoors, playing your *Star Trek* or your *Golden Heroes* games, spare a thought for those out here, battling to and fro in the mud and the slime, the blood and the gunge, simply for possession of a small inflated pig's bladder, and just be glad you're not that pig !

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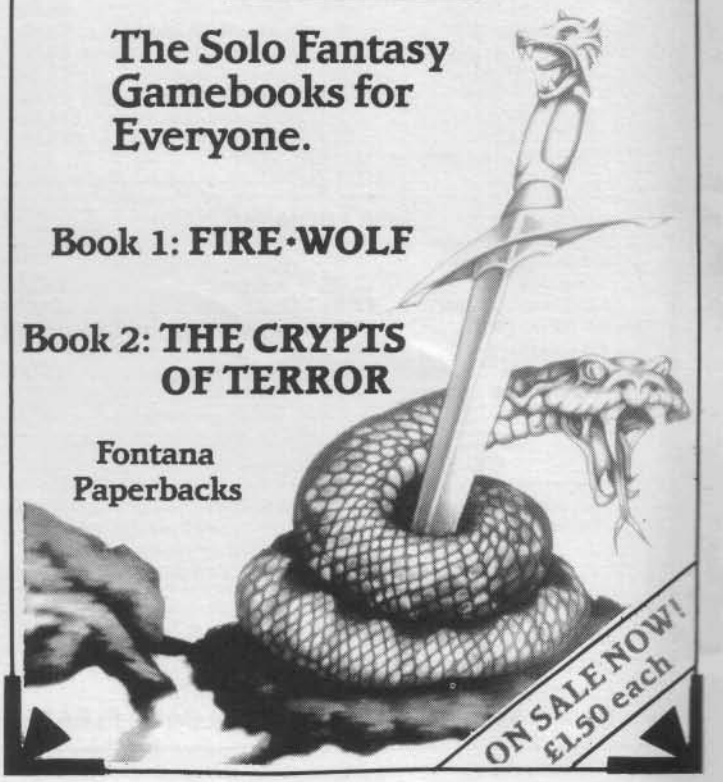

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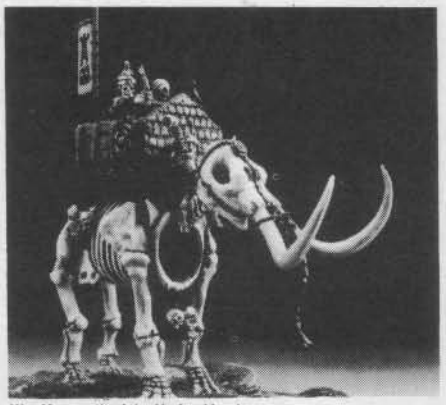

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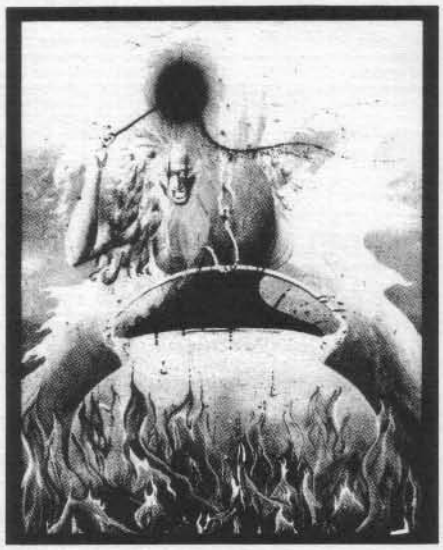

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With this issue I welcome the arrival of my new Assistant Editor, Jon Sutherland, who is taking over the chair recently vacated by Jamie Thomson. Jon and Editorial Assistant Ian Marsh have the unenviable task of wading through the 600+ replies we received for our *Readers of the Lost Ark* survey. Thanks to all those of you who replied.

The first change that we will implement is the format of our *Fiend Factory* department. Over the years, it has produced many fine creatures (even managing to fill the official *AD&D Fiend Folio* with them!) but with one limitation – they have all been for one system. In future, however, we would like to open up *Fiend Factory* to creations for any system from *Call of Cthulhu* to *Golden Heroes*.

Stay tuned for more changes to come!

Ian Livingstone

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Contributions: The editor will be pleased to consider any previously unpublished articles or artwork for inclusion in *White Dwarf*. Contributions should be typed, double-spaced on one side of the paper only.

THE MAD GODS' OMELETTE

A Short Epic by Dave Langford

In the walled city of Kagool, where men were held in the thraldom to the worship of the sacred voles, Erryj and his companion Windloon came by night to a tavern, and drank awhile in silence.

To their table came then a cloaked figure, who at a gesture from Erryj revealed himself to be none other than Dylan Worm, a distant kinsman of doomed Erryj.

"Dark peril threatens, my lord. Again the fate of the World hangs in the balance, for powers beyond the ken of man have been loosed by the sorcerer Thebes Shagreen! When only you may save us all, it ill becomes you to sit drinking at the Sign of the Engorged Lymphatic!"

Erryj smiled a bitter smile. "What has this world done for me that I should do now that doing which the world would fain have me do for it?" he demanded – unanswerably – indicating at the same time his squint, his humped back, his warts, and the black, runecarved artificial leg *Slugbane* which supported his emaciated form.

"Well spoken, Erryj!" cried Windloon, signing for more wine. "Surely 'tis time you made an end to your perilous exploits, to battle and treachery and death ... Me too."

Dylan Worm's fist crashed on the table: a score of empties fell to the floor.

"Is this the Erryj I knew once in fallen Murble? Know you that the Dark Gods walk the earth once more, this day!" He glanced to the window. "This night."

The tavern fell silent. For it was closing time.

"The Dark Gods?" Erryj gave Dylan Worm a searching glance. "Aye, I have heard tell of such. Speak you of the Elder Gods? ... The Younger Gods? The Dead Gods? The Agnostic Gods?" With each utterance a greater stillness filled the room.

"Nay, worse yet," groaned his kinsman. "Thebes Shagreen has raised up ... The Mad Gods!"

And as he spoke, Windloon gave a harsh, fearful cry that seemed to echo through immeasurable spaces.

"Drink up quickly or you follow him," grunted the broad-shouldered bouncer. Erryj cast a baleful crimson stare at the base villain.

"Let me deal with him," pleaded Dylan Worm. "I would have him die cleanly." He drew his great sword *Bowelpiercer*; originally indeed had it been *Pigsticker*, which Dylan Worm thought less dignified.

He was too late. The iron leg *Slugbane* snapped straight, causing Erryj to rise perforce from his seat. At the same time it gave an eerie wailing, as though crying out for human life. Erryj squirted oil into the joint, but to no avail; death-fear washed over the bouncer's face as he realised that he had brought on himself the bane of... The Black Leg! Swifter than thought, *Slugbane* swung and struck with a crunch on the oaf's puny manhood.

"Aaaaaaah!" he cried, falsetto. The fell runes carven on the iron limb glowed with unholy radiance as its sorcerous power sucked the man's essence. He collapsed, and Erryj stalked grimly out, followed by the pallid Dylan Worm.

"The Mad Gods," mused the doomed prince as they walked in darkness. "How can this be? The Law of the Cosmic Debit and Credit Balance does not permit it!"

"It seems the Cosmic Book-keeper doth be on holiday." Dylan Worm's voice was grim.

"And now the Mad Gods run up a perilous Cosmic Overdraft..."

"Until the day of the Final Cosmic Audit."

"'Tis but a legend," snapped Erryj. "Why should I go to my doom against such?"

Windloon spoke at last. "But, friend Erryj, you are already doomed. The world knows it. You keep telling us so yourself."

"Doomed... Aye, I am that."

"'Tis pity," murmured Dylan Worm, "that the fair Zazazoom has fallen into Thebes Shagreen's clutches."

Erryj stiffened. "Which way to Thebes Shagreen, friend and kinsman?"

"He dwells in the Vale of Morg."

"An easy trek..."

"But also in the Vale of Morg," Dylan Worm said softly, "are the Mad Gods."

Erryj thought of the ghastly legends of those dire beings, and then of the enticing Zazazoom, the woman he craved.

"Let them stop me," he cried in a great voice. The iron of the Black Leg resonated evilly to the sound. Inspired to befuddled courage, Windloon responded: "I shall follow you!" Then fell he over and threw up.

"I can give you scant aid in this adventure," explained Dylan Worm, striding hastly away.

Erryj of Murble, doomed prince of no fixed abode, groaned in his sleep. Not only indigestion but seasickness troubled him, as the vaults of memory poured forth ancient fears.

For six hours, as they approached the battle, he had perforce chanted the dark runes from the bows: unless he thus repelled the hovering gulls, the boat's armour-gleaming mercenaries would claim hazard money for their aerial befoulment.

But Erryj had led his horde on, had landed at the Port of Murble and sacked it utterly. Even now the ruins were swathed in mouldering hessian. Then had he confronted the foul usurper Rakoon, who perished in agony beneath the bane of the Black Leg. A madness of destruction had come on Erryj then, and the entire population of the Enchanted Isle of Murble, including the woman he loved (his mother) had died by his boot and the sorcerous malice thereof.

For *Slugbane* was no ordinary artificial leg. Forged by no human hand, no human foot, in times better forgotten, it held a fell power; it drew out the essence of a man and thereby charged its bearer with unholy energy. So the Leg and its bearer walked together (how else?) through spectral shadows or under the hellish glare of the tainted sun, and none knew which was master. Save Erryj himself.

... "Yes, Master," he intoned, bending himself to the ancient Murblean rite of foot worship. Everything seemed cloudy... he woke suddenly and shivered. A great weight seemed to press upon his chest.

"Not *now*, Windloon..."

"Sorry."

Setting off at dawn, the pair trudged for two hours; an uncanny sense of doom slowly filled the air.

"The woods!" cried Windloon, "the woods!"

From the shadowed forest poured an endless horde: green and slime-bedecked, many feet long, gnashing their jagged teeth...

"The Giant Newts of Nematode!" Erryj gasped.

"Are... are they friendly?"

"Nay. No newts are good newts. And these be no ordinary newts, but a sending of Thebes Shagreen!"

Closer and closer crept the slavering horde, as Erryj strained to recall a defensive spell. Windloon muttered, "I like this not."

"I have it! I shall summon the Froglord!" Erryj cleared his throat.

"... By the glaucous jelly-like masses of thy spawn, Aid us, oh Froglord, this perilous morn."

"It scans not well."

"I have scarce begun. Besides, witling, you know nothing of High Magic.

"... And by the little wriggling black things that are thy young, I call you to hearken unto the spell that I have sung. To end these evil newts from noisome marshes, or possibly bogs, I summon you, *Lord of the*... ummm... *Frogs*!"

"Be that all?" Windloon's voice was hopeful.

"There is yet the Activating Word." The newts were very close now, and a fell light was in their eyes.

"BREKEKEKEX KO-AX KO-AX!"

Gluurk, the Froglord, stirred in its otherworld home. From afar it felt the tugging of the Pact: for it was bonded in slime-brotherhood to the Royal Line of Murble. Was it worth the effort? it mused; but presently croaked "Well, if I don't save him, something else will."

Below, Erryj relaxed.

High in the air came a piercing and vaguely obscene sound, as the Froglord descended from its high spiritual plane. Immense and froggy, it plummeted to earth. Erryj and Windloon dived to one side as the gigantic batrachian bulk struck the ground, instantly crushing the myriad newts to pulp beneath its immensity. It sat wobbling there and emitted thunderous croaks.

"Methinks the solution is worse than the problem, Erryj. Dismiss your supernatural aid, and let us proceed."

Erryj looked haggard. "Would that it were that easy. The Froglord must be rewarded."

So as Windloon averted his gaze, Erryj did that which was needful; whereat the slimy deity ascended happily to its slimy heaven.

"Never does he stop hoping," thought the doomed prince, distastefully wiping off the lipstick with a silken cloth.

They toiled on into a swirling sea of mist. Stark and sudden, a city loomed before them. As they passed within, the gate closed smoothly behind them, and a deep mocking laugh filled the air.

"I just remembered the one about the dragon and the commercial traveller," Windloon explained.

"Silence, friend." Erryj examined the dark-red buildings, and shuddered. "Our peril is great; for this is none other than... the Tourist Trap Built of Blood!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Wilt thou *stop* that, Windloon!"

"'Twas not I." They looked all about them; presently Erryj spoke again. "I remember now. Legend has it that here dwells the giant Ruislip, whose wont it is to entrap tourists and drain their blood for building material. We stand now at the core of the evil, in the Plaza paved with Plasma."

"Better that we left," suggested Windloon, battering frantically at the gates.

"If the tales are true, that will help not. We must defeat Ruislip himself. 'Tis said that he doth creep up upon his unwary victims..."

There came a sound of thunderous yet fantastically stealthy footsteps.

"Then doth he cast his net..." Erryj was so engrossed that he failed to hear the unmistakable hiss of a net being cast.

"Then binds he the luckless ones, and carries them to a hidden cell, and there does he leave them until he is ready to take their blood!" So Erryj concluded dramatically; the door of the hidden cell slammed behind them.

"Thy sources of information are impeccable," Windloon complained.

"Worry not, I shall free us with the power of *Slugbane* ! ...Oh." Base indeed was Ruislip, to confiscate his leg.

"How shall we escape, Erryj? Why do you not summon the Froglord?"

"Perilous it is to repeat one's effects too often," the prince muttered. "Better that we rest awhile."

HO, HO, HO!" The great laugh shook them awake. It was morning, in the eighteen-foot door was silhouetted the stooped figure of Ruislip.

"'Tis time," he boomed.

"After you," Windloon quavered.

"*Blood and guts! Clooti!*" cried Erryj.

"Desist!" the giant shouted. "Else shall I have your giblets for goblets!"

"*Clooti!* O my patron demon! Lord of the Three Madnesses, the Five Banes and the Seven Nonfilterable Viruses! Aid me now!"

"I get it not," said Windloon with a shrug.

"Clooti! The souls of my descendants..."

A trapdoor opened in the floor, and amid a cloud of sulphurous smoke, the demon shot into the room.

"You summon me at the most awkward times," he muttered darkly, plucking at his red tights and otherwise adjusting his awe-inspiring raiment. "What afflicts you?"

Erryj pointed silently at Ruislip, who begun to quake in fear.

"Nay... Nay..."

Clooti gestured at him with a pitchfork, and instantly he turned into a horse.

"My thanks, Lord Clooti," said Erryj.

"A pleasure. Sign *here*."

"Aye... how many souls of my descendants have I pledged now?"

"Eighty-three generation. More frugal should you be with our *deus ex machina* service. 'Tis time, too, that you *had* some descendants, princeling."

"Aye." Erryj blushed. Clooti signalled his farewell and vanished.

Pausing only to retrieve *Slugbane*, they hastened on their way.

As they neared the Vale of Morg, there appeared the figure of a wondrously beautiful wench, rivalling even the fair Zazazoom in her complexion and bust measurements.

"Queen Ikenlupa!" gasped Erryj. "Look not on her, Windloon! Her fell beauty will ensnare your soul and taint it with her hidden evil!"

"Wha'?" said Windloon, taking a dazed step forward.

"Windloon! 'Tis but illusion... Hear you not the whirring of fell magic? See you not that she doth flicker at sixteen frames per second?"

"Oh." Windloon stopped; the image vanished, leaving but a forty-foot pit where it had been.

"Ha!" said Erryj, "this bodes well. Thebes Shagreen seeks to bemuse us with trickery – no doubt 'twas his last trick!"

At the very rim of the Vale, he paused.

Below, rank on rank, irrefutably real, were ranged the Abominations of Yandro, the Glaucous Glob of Ghooli, Thebes Shagreen himself, and three full pantheons of Mad Gods.

Erryj sighed; against the horde that opposed him, only the darkest powers would avail. This was a job for – The Black Leg!

Again he paused. "What perchance have these gods done to me, anyway? Live and let live; such has always been my motto." He made as if to turn...

Then did the Leg glow with balefire and swell mightily from its stolen energies! There came a rending sound. One day, mused Erryj with wistful prescience, the skills of men will bring forth elastic tights. But then *Slugbane* sorcerously and treacherously elongated itself by a full eight inches. Erryj tried desperately to fling himself to the ground – too late! Against his will was he carried hopping towards the horde of nameless abominations in the Vale.

Even with *Slugbane's* power, he was helpless against so many. There was but one chance. Before he reached the waiting doom, Erryj might be able to summon aid, perhaps even produce something from the gigantic from the gigantic hat which he carried always with him. Yet jolted by *Slugbane's* uncontrollable motion, he could only recall torn fragments of spells.

"There was a young lady of Riga," he began experimentally.

With a sudden pop, a stranger appeared. He too had an artificial leg, akin to *Slugbane*, or so it seemed.

"Greetings, Erryj." The newcomer hopped to keep pace with him. "My name is Jorin, and I am of course another incarnation of yourself."

Bemused, Erryj frowned. "How can this be? It maketh no sense."

"Know you not that the Conjunction of the Myriad Balls approaches? That two aspects of the Sempiternal Saviour should thus converse is but a small matter, compared with those improbabilities which the Great Author of All Things has yet in store!"

By now, the pair had hopped through the first three ranks of Mad Gods, who were looking on with vast amusement. Atop the ridge, Windloon shouted helpful and encouraging advice.

"Jorin! How can even a second *Slugbane* prevail against so many?"

Jorin smiled. "Link arms with me, friend Erryj..."

"I'm not that sort."

"Quickly! or all is lost!"

"Very well," said Erryj. "...To battle!"

As they linked arms, a sudden tide of godlike energy surged through Erryj. "Mayhap I am that sort after all." he thought.

Then he saw that the ground was far away. *Slugbane* and its twin, grown to monstrous size, held the pair high above the horde, taller than the tallest gods. At their commanding thoughts, the great iron legs rose and fell, rose and fell, dealing destruction right and left. To a deity, the Mad Gods perished. Last of all remained Thebes Shagreen: defiant to the end, he died with a taunt on his lips.

"Everyone knows the runes on that leg are but the signatures of thy friends!" he cried as the massive foot descended.

"Squelch!" he added a moment later.

"That doth be that," Jorin remarked. "Farewell, friend Erryj; remember thou owest me a favour."

"Aye," said Erryj as the black iron legs shrank to normal size. He disentangled his arm from Jorin's and shuddered at the scene of carnage. "Call thou not I, I shall call thee."

With another pop, Jorin vanished as providentially as he had come.

"Wait for me!" shouted Windloon, advancing and waving his sword. "Oh dear, 'tis little glory that you've left for my poor self." Sheathing his blade, he philosophically set about looting the corpses.

All peril was ended; Erryj sought at last for Zazazoom. The castle of Thebes Shagreen lay in ruins, but before it stood a slim figure... It was indeed his love. But her form was not as he recalled it; she had been changed by the Mad Gods, fearfully changed...

"You may be green and scaly, sweetling, yet still you are the woman I love," cried Erryj in a noble voice, gagging slightly. But at the moment his need was great.

"Oh Erryj, how canst thou bear to look upon the ichor-dripping fangs which once were my pearly teeth?"

"'Tis not your looks alone that I care for," Erryj explained, fumbling with his clothing. "Accurst hose!"

"Truly thou art a noble prince, Erryj. Fain would I reward such constancy... pity 'tis that the cruel Mad Gods in their evil changings did make me into a male."

"Gaaaaah," said Erryj, as the Black Leg lashed out almost automatically. The screams died down. "Never have I been lucky with my women," he murmured.

"An ill fortune dogs you, Erryj," Windloon sympathised.

"Aye. Yet the future may not always be black..." Smiling, he playfully kicked Windloon on the shin.

"No! No! I did not sheathe the Black Leg! Forgive me, Windloon, forgive me!" It was too late; *Slugbane* swung on to find its inevitable mark.

"Aaaaaaah!" commented Windloon as he fell.

As Erryj wept over the corpse of his faithful companion, a strange and fearful vision came to him.

...He stood, last living thing upon the Earth: alone. And slowly, slowly, the Black Leg curled back in a hideous fluid motion; the fell runes glowed for the last time as – crunch! – Erryj perished by his own leg. It detached itself from his empty cardboard husk and hopped triumphantly off into the setting sun.

"Farewell, my friend! I was a thousand times less artificial than thou!"

And Erryj was no more; utterly forgotten until the Great Author of All Things saw fit to resurrect him once more.

Which was pretty soon.

The vision passed, and twilight came.

With a mad cry the doomed prince flung himself onto a horse and rode out into the night, stricken to the heart, yet conscious that he might not stand in the way of Fate and the Reconciliation of the Cosmic Ledger. For written in the runes of his future were more base slayings and treacheries, foulest barratry and tax offences, madness, insobriety and despair.

"It doth beat working for a living," he thought.□

In Open Box, *science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks are revised.*

OPEN BOX

THE CURSE OF THE CTHONIANS — Chaosium £7.95
GLOZEL EST AUTHENTIQUE! — TOME £6.95
THE HORRIBLE SECRET OF MONHEGAN ISLAND — Grenadier £5.95

The flood of scenario packs for the excellent *Call of Cthulhu* continues with these three releases; as usual, they are of varying quality, but all are good value for their respective prices. *Chaosium* have produced the most impressive pack, with their four-adventure collection, *The Curse of the Cthonians*.

This 88-page book maintains their high standards of presentation, with neat maps and discrete illustrations dotted throughout, but it is the text which proves to be the most outstanding feature. As with *Chaosium's* other *CoC* adventures, the attention to detail in each of these four tales is quite incredible. In some places it is too much to take in all at once, and a prospective Keeper (referee) may well have to re-read the descriptions before play starts in order to capture all their subtle nuances.

The first tale is of *The Dark Carnival*, an absolutely classic setting for any self-respecting horror tale – a large, mysterious Rhode Island fun-fair. Sinister things lurk in the Hall of Mirrors, people enter the Tunnel of Terrors never to return, and the whole atmosphere is very reminiscent of Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. Like all the adventures in the pack, it should only be attempted by experienced investigators; not just because of the number of nasties around could turn it into a bloodbath within minutes, but because of the powers of deduction needed to solve its hidden mysteries.

This is especially true in the second tale, *The Curse of Chaugnar Faugn*, which introduces a new Great Old One, the eponymous Chaugnar himself. Called in to help the ailing scientist father of an old flame of one of the party, the investigators are soon embroiled with Tcho-Tcho, shanktak-riding priests, the legendary physicist Nikolai Tesla, and the Elephant God of Tsant! The party will need all their sanity to survive this one, and there's worse to come!

Thoth's Dagger and *The City Without A Name*, a pair of linked adventures, are full of linguistic and Kabbalistic twists, which must be solved by the investigators if they are to get anywhere. To help a little, there is a short article on such things included as an Appendix to the book, but if I were them I don't think I'd bother – what with the hordes of undead, the nest of Cthonians, and old Nyarlathotep himself all to come. All of them are very highly recommended as superb examples of how to design thrilling, well-crafted scenarios.

Glozel Est Authentique! is less impressive all round, and some of *TOME's* previous *CoC* adventure packs have been notable for their poor layout, terrible artwork and hordes of stereotypical Germans. Well, just for a change, this one has terrible layout, quite good artwork and hordes of stereotypical French and Russians. The title adventure (the first of two) derives its rather curious name from a declaration as to the authenticity of a strange archaeological discovery. The find, of a number of obscurely-inscribed tablets apparently much older than similar finds, coincides rather markedly to a number of weird occult events in the tiny French village of Glozel. These eventually lead to a rather forced link between the modern-day descendants of the legendary Knights Templar (now a glorified masonic lodge!) and rampaging Cthulhu cultists. But by the end of this rather terse episode, very little of any consequence has actually happened, to either the investigators or to Glozel itself.

And if you think the central idea in *Glozel* is forced, don't go near *Secrets of the Kremlin*, the other adventure in this book. Would you believe me if I told you that Josef Stalin was a servant of the Elder Gods? That he actually possessed a copy of 'The Necronomicon', and hired someone to translate it into Russian? Or that in a secret chamber deep beneath the Kremlin itself, he kept a live Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath? No, I didn't think you would. I think you can form your own impressions of this adventure; I couldn't stop giggling as I read it, and I don't hold much hope of ever being able to create an atmosphere of 'terrible suspense and lurking fear' if I ever had the nerve to try this scenario on my players.

Much more down-to-earth is *The Horrible Secret of Monhegan Island*, an everyday tale of Dagon-worshipping New England Puritans. In an obscure fishing village, an ancient rite to increase the catch has been revived with fatal results. The party are lured in with stories of missing girls, but really intended to be the next batch of sacrifices. The suspense begins to mount, as the investigators have until midnight to find out what exactly has been going on before they get the chop! This scenario, though a little lacking in complexity compared to *Curse of the Cthonians*, shows that simplicity *can* work to a story's advantage, and manages to reproduce that strangely disturbing atmosphere of such Lovecraft tales as *The Shadow Over Innsmouth*.

Also included in this 48-page booklet is a smaller, beginners' adventure, *The House in the Woods*, where the investigators are sent in search of a missing professor, to (you guessed it!) a dingy house in the woods. Unfortunately, the poor man has already been dismembered and his remains carried off by unknown monsters... who will soon return for them! Both adventures are well laid out, with neat aerial-view drawings rather than maps, and a few average illustrations. Bearing in mind the comparatively cheap price of this book, it presents a very useful package, though still not a patch on the outstanding *Curse of the Cthonians*... Zero SAN here I come!

	CoC	GEA!	HSMI
Presentation:	10	4	6
Content:	9	5	7
Value for money:	9	6	8
Overall:	9	5	7

Stephen Kyle

GAMESMASTER PACK — £7.95
FOR YOUR INFORMATION — £7.95
Victory Games

Both of these packages for the *007* RPG are intended for use by the GM and both cover vastly different needs. The *Gamesmaster Pack*, released at the time of the *007* game itself, contains a referee's shield, character sheets and some stylish cardboard figures with a bright blue (!) gridded movement sheet.

Of these, the shield immediately catches the eye due to the variety of colours used to highlight the tables printed thereon. Its use is immediately apparent as it will save much frantic flipping of pages to find the tables essential to play the game. It is hardly up-to-date, however, and only stats for weapons and vehicles in the basic game are included – owners of the *Q Manual* will need to keep it handy.

The rest of the package seems to have been designed to fill the box – it is an

expensive way of obtaining 40 character sheets, especially since these are going to be a 'renewable' item. The cardboard figures are attractively drawn and painted and of a good solid quality, yet the number included are too few and too specialised and the gridsheet is too likely to decay quickly since it is on thin paper.

With *For Your Information, Victory Games* seems to have finally discovered the existance of the box lid, hopefully they will be updating all previous supplement releases with this packaging, and again the contents seem to be limited to one useful piece with plenty of fillers. Two small pads of MI6 headed paper (one for documents, one for dossiers) and a heavy duty pad of NPC records, all of which can be accomplished by your average GM with the standard tools of pen and paper. The main booklet is about half the size of the main rulebook and contains twelve chapters of additional guidelines for the GM. The information seems to be aimed mainly at the unimaginative who should surely not be playing the game in the first place. There are some delightful turns of phrase to amuse readers, with MI6 agents leaving Mother England (sic) and, when covering NPCs: 'Does he often say "Aw nuts!" or some other expletive when shocked, surprised or dismayed?' For the Bond freak who obviously hasn't purchased the 'adventures of the films' there are a number of extra enemies and allies detailed, but the most useful section has to be the brief notes on other intelligence agencies.

Whilst *For Your Information* is undoubtedly a useful addition to the *007* GM, the only piece of real interest is the booklet. Since the same can be said of the *Gamesmaster Pack* (except that the shield is the only useful inclusion), I can quite unreservedly say that neither are worth the money asked for them and that *Victory Games* had better learn very quickly about packaging games add-ons if they expect to sell any.

	Gamesmaster Pack	For Your Information
Content:	4	3
Presentation:	7	6
Value:	2	2
Overall:	4	3

Bob Neville

RINGWORLD
Chaosium Inc **£24.95**

Larry Niven's two novels *Ringworld* and *The Ringworld Engineers* have been, deservedly, amongst the most successful space opera adventure stories of the last few years. Anyone who knows the books on which this game is based will not be surprised by the size (and resultant expense) of the finished product. Nonetheless, a number of features – including several alien races – seem to have been dropped at the last minute (resulting in a number of frustrating hints and unresolved cross-references), and we are promised a *Ringworld Companion* very soon but in the meantime, referees will have to improvise or avoid leading characters into unmapped areas.

The game holds four books, some cut-out cardboard character markers, a few polyhedral dice, and an assortment of loose sheets with information and tables, *Chaosium* advertising etc, including some essays that presumably didn't quite fit in the books. The character sheets provided don't include any with Puppeteer hit locations, and have some other glitches which I will return to.

The meat of the game is contained within the *Explorer Book*, which has a very brief introduction to role-playing in general and *Ringworld* in particular, followed by details of character generation (humans, Kzin and Puppeteers), game mechanics, movement, combat, and other ways of taking damage. The system is *Chaosium's* excellent *RuneQuest/ Basic Role-Playing* design, with appropriate modifications. Here, a character's starting skills are determined by assessing how long the being spent in education or various careers, then distributing points between appropriate specialities; many skills are arranged in 'Root/Branch' form, so that, for example, one first studies Physics in general up to a maximum determined by one's Intelligence and Education, then one can specialise in (say) Nuclear Physics, Acoustics, or whatever. The system is clean and elegant, but it is fair to say that (as both humans and puppeteers have excellent anti-aging drugs), a character's initial capabilities are almost directly proportional to his or her age, which is found by a random dice roll and can vary widely. Another interesting feature of the character generation system is the provision for minor personal disabilities for humans and Kzin (hyperspace phobia, transplant resistance, and suchlike) and major psychological problems for puppeteers (who have to be mad to possess enough courage to go exploring).

This section also contains two of the game's biggest errors, however. Firstly, the starting percentages quoted in the book differ in several cases from those given on the character sheet, and secondly, although Unarmed Combat skill is described as *enhancing* the effects of human punch and kick attacks, no damage figures or base percentages are quoted for such combat.

The other major part of this book is a set of lengthy descriptions of various human colony worlds throughout Known Space, presumably placed here so that a player can read up on his or her character's home world – quite fascinating to Nivenophiles.

Next comes the *GameMaster Book*, which provides the background data needed to run the game. It contains a lot of data on the Ringworld itself and a sample scenario (but little on the principles of scenario design; the authors evidently assume an audience of experienced gamers). For the benefit of those whoh have somehow managed to avoid the two background novels, the Ringworld is a huge, phenomenally strong ring spinning around a star about as far out as the Earth is from the Sun, providing a comfortable, habitable, and staggeringly vast area of 'land' on its inside surface. (Actually, if any prospective buyers or player of this game haven't read the books – and several other Known Space novels and stories – they should do so first, as otherwise they could find their enjoyment of both game and writings severely reduced. On the other hand, players who *have* read the books may well actually know more than their characters, which could also be irritating for the gamesmaster.) There is little in the essays that is not in the books and the information is gathered here in one place, explicitly stated rather than hinted at, and generally made more useful to the gamesmaster. There are also game-descriptions of some of the archaic or ultra-sophisticated technological artifacts likely to be found in the hands of the inhabitants of the Ringworld, and rules on subjects such as psionics.

The *Technology Book* covers the very sophisticated devices of the twenty-ninth century in a reasonably logical fashion, beginning with power sources and then describing the machines that draw on them (being divided up into that first chapter, then others on Computers, Medical Equipment, Tools, Vehicles, some lethal Weapons and some appropriately resistant but less than perfect Protective Devices). For speed of play, an *Explorer Pack* of standard tools and devices is made available at a reasonable price.

Last of the books is the *Creatures Book*, which is divided up into five sections. *Aliens* include Bandersnatchi (tough), Dolphins, Grogs (very tough), Kdatlyno, Outsiders and Trinocs; some of these could easily be used as player characters with a very little thought. The section on *Pak* is, of course, mostly drawn from the novel *Protector*. The next section, concerning the *Hominid* races inhabiting the Ringworld, left me subtly disappointed. *The Ringworld Engineers* features a wide variety races, and emphasises that these forms have evolved to fill the wide range of empty ecological niches available on the Ringworld. The game presents us with long, detailed essays on the handful of races appearing in the books, plus similar treatments of a couple more of the designers' own creation; in places, whole phrases are borrowed from the novels, but no clear analysis of the curious ecology of the Ringworld is given. Similarly, the section on Ringworld *Animals* is simply a series of reasonably dangerous, moderately interesting specimens with peculiar names; the kind of thing a dungeon master would use as a 'room-filler'. Equally, the concluding section on *Flora* has a handful of useful or poisonous specimens (and, of course, the Slaver Sunflowers).

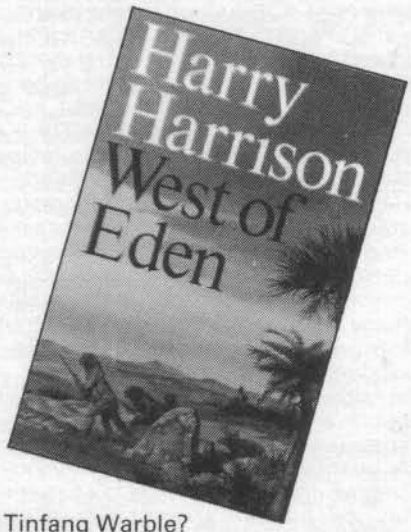
This game takes a superb background idea, applies a good system of mechanics to it, and comes back with a disappointing result. It may be that I was expecting too much; as a long-time Known Space addict I've been on tenterhooks since the first mention of the project, and (once the *Companion* appears to complete the system) I may well find myself running or playing *Ringworld* regularly, despite my feeling that the game as presented lacks the depth (as opposed as size) it could and should have possessed.

Presentation:	5	**Enjoyment:**	6
Playability:	6	**Complexity:**	6
Skill:	7	**Rules:**	5
Overall:	6		

Phil Masters

Critical Mass is a regular fantasy and science fiction book review column, written by Dave Langford. This issue he's up amongst the...

SF STARS!



Imagine a reference work which makes this column unnecessary, a *Michelin* Guide to SF, unerringly fingering the five-star books and authors. David Wingrove tries it in *The Science Fiction Sourcebook* [*Longman* 320pp £8.95], grading more than 2500 books by 880 authors and awarding up to 5 stars in each of 4 categories: Readability, Characterisation, Idea Content and Literary Merit. There's also lots of useful – especially to newer readers – material on SF subgenres, writing, criticism, magazines and publishing. So far, so good.

The trouble lies in these star ratings. Readers may inspect by appointment my list of 90-odd SF notables who don't get top marks in *any* category for *any* of their works – including Amis, Blish, Brunner, Burgess, Disch, Leiber, Niven, Poe, Priest, Spinrad, Sturgeon, van Vogt, Verne and Wyndham. Five stars for readability are given to my own *The Space Eater* [*Arrow* £1.75], which is nice but doesn't convince me I'm more readable than *all* those people. Five stars for characterization go to pulpsmith Jack Chalker, putting him ahead of Angela Carter, Frank Herbert and D M Thomas as well as everyone above. Five for literary merit are awarded to competent, uninspired Charles Sheffield, decreeing him a better writer than Aldiss, Dick, Huxley, Nabokov, Orwell, Mary Shelley, Swift, Vonnegut and Wells...

This is a game with no ending. The *Sourcebook* is enormous fun for browsing in, raising your eyebrows at, and violently disagreeing with. Just don't trust those stars!

Harry Harrison's *West of Eden* [*Granada* 578pp £8.95] is shorter than the page count suggests: the typeface is so huge, I had to read it at arms' length. Inspired by those inaccurate stories of Primitive Man battling the by then long-extinct Dinosaurs, Harrison's alternate world has intelligent saurian life evolved to the east and mankind to the west of the Atlantic. When lizards reach the New World, there's an inevitable clash. Impressively researched (Harrison subcontracted his biology and lingusitics to experts), it has one of those fascinating backgrounds you only find in SF: the culture of the saurian 'Yilanè' and their advanced biotechnology. The story is slowish and simple enough: a boy is captured by Yilanè, learns their ways (including a spot of kinky sex), escapes, and masterminds the human counterblow. It's the density of background detail which makes this, not a Great book, but the best Harrison for some while. Nice illustrations, too.

'Background' is also the word for the latest Tolkien exhumation, *The Book of Lost Tales II* [*Unwin* 385pp £12.50], comprising some of the very first drafts of *Silmarillion* material. Completists will lust after this high-class production, especially the bits omitted in later drafts. I have mixed feelings: though Tolkien's major work gained depth from this lifelong background mythology, I'm uncertain that it's *all* worth publishing and annotating with such ghastly solemnity. Would Tolkien himself, with his marvellous ear for names, have wanted the world to know that back in callow 1917 he perpetrated things like an Elf called Tinfang Warble?

The Integral Trees [*Macdonald* 240pp £8.95] is Larry Niven's latest hard-SF romp, much more fun than the weary *Ringworld Engineers*. As usual the action comprises a guided tour of a vast astronomical feature: the Smoke Ring, a doughnut-shaped zone of breathable atmosphere with 30 times Earth's volume, stabilized by a bizarrely unlikely configuration of sun, neutron star and gas-giant planet 10^{14} cubic kilometres of habitable free-fall ecology... 'Trees' up to 100km in length float in orbit, tidal forces producing pseudo-gravity for human colonies at each end (quibble: no visible reason for such monsters to evolve). Delightfully ingenious stuff.

Neuromancer [*Gollancz* 252pp £8.95] is William Gibson's first novel: violence and computer crime in the high-tech, high-squalor, drug-ravaged future briefly glimpsed in his short 'Burning Chrome'. Gibson crackles with creative energy, hammering your forebrain with ideas, colour, future slang and brand-names (the Ian Fleming technique). Aided by a female assassin and a dead man coded into ROM, our computer-jockey hero is riding a Chinese killer-virus program through *Tron*-style cyberspace against the dreaded walls of ice (Intrusion Countermeasures Electronics) surrounding a monstrous Artificial Intelligence... I spent the whole time on the edge of my seat and got cramp as a result. In a way Gibson's pace is too frenetic, so unremitting that the reader never gets a rest and can't see the plot for the dazzle. Otherwise: nice one.

Something completely different is Thomas Disch's *The Businessman: A Tale of Terror* [*Cape* 292pp £8.95], the best 'horror' novel I've read in years and also the funniest. Beautifully tongue-in-cheek passages and scenes of wild farce make the murders, transformations, resurrections and demonic possessions seem all the nastier. When the villain flees a condign haunting with all sphincters loosened, he collapses trembling onto the toilet and is taken from beneath by a ghoulish severed hand – which clamps tight onto a tender part of him, refusing to let go till he crawled to the phone and confessed his crimes: I was laughing and hunching up nervously at the same time. Like that hand, Disch keeps coming from unexpected angles and tweaking tender places; you never know whether it'll be the adrenals or the funnybone. Highly recommended.

Raven of Destiny by Peter Tremayne [*Methuen* 286pp £8.95] looks anachronistic – a pal of Cuchullain's travelling from Ireland to fight at Thermopylae and sack Delhi – but proves to be based on the Celtic invasion of Greece in 279BC, which I'd never heard of. Score one to Tremayne for painstaking historical accuracy and innovative use of history. The rest is more familiar. The writing is competent; the plot moves in a haze of doomy prophecy as hero Bran stubbornly does all the wrong things. He lacks the stature to be a true Tragic Hero: ungenerous and not over-bright (fancy falling for drugged victuals *twice*), he performs lots of the usual fantasy-hero Deeds without ever being *interesting* enough to follow to the foretold climax. Oh, the book isn't particularly awful, just sort of... routine.

Billed as fantasy but in fact SF, *The Fishers of Darksea* by Roger Eldridge [*Unicorn* 214pp £2.95] is a powerful, mystical tale set on the remote, icy and volcanic island Darksea. Everything is seen uncompromisingly through a native Fisher's eyes and mind; finding (what later proves to be) a walkie-talkie on the foreshore, he sees an odd, squared-off fish with a hard shell and a long feeler. A truly consistent and well-imagined 'alien' society.

Help! Space runs low. *The Birth of the People's Republic of Antarctica* by John Calvin Batchelor [*Granada* 388pp £3.50] is wild, wonderful, weird and epic, only SF to the extent implied in the title. Clifford Simak's *Special Deliverance* [*Methuen* 218pp £1.95]: minor but pleasant SF-pastoral, marred by dependence on a 'puzzle' which any *D&D* novice would solve in minutes. *Bluesong* by Sydney J van Scyoc [*Penguin* 261pp £1.95] is the expected sequel to *Darkchild* – reviewed in *WD56* – equally nicely written but with less impact if you've read Book 1. *The Omicron Invasion* [*Granada* 205pp £1.75] carries E E Smith's name but is by Stephen Goldin: ninth in the posthumous 'Family D'Alembert' cash-ins on Smith's popularity. Read it at your peril. T J Bass's *Half-Past Human* [*Methuen* 279pp £1.95] prefaces his more successful *The Godwhale*: a quirky adventure of devolving humanity in a future of 'Hive' dwellings. *Elvis – The Novel* by Robert Graham and Keith Baty [*Granada* 254pp £2.50] *is*, believe it or not, sort-of-SF in which Presley survives to this day, makes a guest appearance with the Clash and lives 'the life he should have led.' Music is a blank area to tone-deaf Langford, so no further comment; as Wittgenstein remarked, 'Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen, meaning, 'Bye-bye till next month, everyone.'□

THE NINJA

A New Character Class for AD&D usable with the scenario Hour of the Tiger by Chris Elliott and Richard Edwards

NINJA REQUIREMENTS
The ninja are essentially a sub-class of Assassin, although they bear resemblances to the Monk character class. The Assassin has secondary abilities of spying and disguise whilst the Monk has martial arts. The character that follows is a combination of these two classes using the guidelines set out in the previous three articles *Night's Dark Agents* (*WD56-58*). It is assumed that the character is a member of an hereditary clan of ninja and that this clan teaches a certain ryu or school of ninjutsu. It is further assumed that the character is human, although it is not unthinkable for certain non-human races to develop ninjutsu. However, it is unlikely that a human ninja would knowingly associate with a non-human ninja, (and vice-versa) for any reason. In order to qualify as a ninja a character must have the following minimum ability scores; Strength 12, Intelligence 11, Wisdom 9, Dexterity 15, Constitution 11, Charisma 5. Ninja do not gain any experience points bonuses, although Dexterity does give them Armour Class adjustments.

ALIGNMENT
Ninja are pure neutral in alignment, since their cold-blooded attitude to taking life comes from professionalism rather than any devotion to evil as an end to itself. If a ninja character changes alignment then all skills will be frozen at their present development and the ninja becomes technically known as a Yakuza (gangster or bandit). The ryu will no longer teach any more skills, and the ex-ninja will be shunned by previous associates. Although no longer able to develop skills, the character will still be able to gain new experience levels, along with increases in hit dice, saving rolls, and fighting ability. If the character's change of alignment was involuntary and they eventually regain true neutrality then the ryu will accept them once more as a pupil providing the character atones for the lapse in a similar way to a penitent Paladin.

EXPERIENCE POINTS AND HIT POINTS
Ninja gain levels at the same rate as assassins, ie 0-1,500 1st level, 1,501-3,000 2nd level etc. Ninja also use 6-sided dice to determine hit points. They are allowed to use any magical weapons, rings, and items designed for Thieves and Assassins. All treasure and magic found must be surrendered to the chunin, or middle man (played by the referee) although items may be borrowed for special missions at the chunin's discretion.

NINJA ABILITIES
A first level ninja has similar abilities to a thief, although slightly modified. These are: Sleight-of-Hand (pick pockets) 30%, Find/Remove Traps 20%, Move Silently 15%, Hide in Shadows 10%, Hear Noise 10%, Climb Walls 85%, open hand attacks, and tracking (as ranger of same level). These 8 basic skills are what a 1st level ninja begins with, but upon gaining 2nd level and at each subsequent increase the character may opt to learn additional skills at the expense of gaining proficiency in ones already learned. The way this works is that each time the character goes up one level there are increases in 8 skills, however, at the characters option one additional skill may be learned (at each level increase) providing that one skill that has already been learned remains at the previous proficiency level. For example, a 1st level Ninja gains enough experience to rise to 2nd level and opts to learn lai-jutsu (fast draw); this can only be done by 'freezing' one of the previous skills at the level it is now. The character decides to leave Climb Walls at 85% but to increase the chances of success in the other skills. This means that the ninja now knows 9 skills but can only progress in 8 of them at a time. A 3rd level ninja could have 10 skills, but again may only increase 8 of them per level. In this way a ninja can learn a large number of the necessary tricks of the trade without them being given all at once and unbalancing the game. It should also gain favor with the local Thieves Guild as, generally speaking, a thief is still a better thief than a ninja at the equivalent level since the Thief is a specialist.

SKILLS
The following skills are available as options at any time that the character gains a new level, but not at first level. For convenience they are listed in the same categories as in the previous articles (*Night's Dark Agents*).

Stealth
Defence: The ninja's costume (shinobi shozoku) is only equivalent to AC10, but by choosing this talent the ninja may gain in effective Armour Class as a monk.
Swimming: Ninja receive no penalties for combat when in water (at any depth) and may hold their breath for 30 seconds per level gained in this skill up to a maximum of 3 minutes. Ninja may remain submerged indefinitely if they can use a snorkle.

Endurance and Agility
Suppleness: This is the skill that enables ninja to squeeze through tiny spaces and to escape from bonds. It starts at 10% but each gain in level increases this chance by 5%.
Movement: Ninja use the same movement rates as, monks. If this skill is learned then they may also move sideways at normal rates, allowing them to move through very narrow spaces quickly. Once learned, there is no need for progression in this skill.

Survival and Woodcraft
Tracking: As stated earlier ninja track as rangers.
Survival: Ninja with this skill can live off the land outdoors, but not in a dungeon. Once learned, there is no progression in this skill.

Martial Arts
Unarmed combat: Ninja use the monk's table for open hand attacks (this is a basic skill) but may opt for Yubijutsu (nerve strikes) as a special subject. This allows them to add the ½HP to damage as monks, per level learned.
Arrow cutting: This skill allows ninja to knock away or dodge missiles like monks, using their hands or weapons.
Armed combat: Ninja use the assassins 'to hit' table when using weapons. Ninja may use any weapon available and begin with bastard sword (ninjato), staff, and dart (shuriken). They gain one weapon skill every four levels.
Fast draw: This skill gives a +1 to initiative per level learned.

Chemistry and Herbalism
These skills may be used to prepare poisons (as an assassin of equivalent level), explosives (if allowed in your campaign), secret inks, medicines and antidotes. Once learned, there is no need for progression in this skill.

Hypnotism
Sleight of Hand: This is a basic skill, allowing the ninja to perform 'stage magic' is order to frighten, distract or confuse enemies.
Kuji-no-in: This is only available at 3rd level and above and gives cleric-like abilities to the ninja by use of auto-suggestion and applied psychology. These abilities are treated as the equivalent clerical spell but they are not magical in nature, therefore may not be dispelled. The nine signs must be learned in the correct sequence. The signs are:

1 *Rin*:	Iron Soul (*remove fear* spell)
2 *Pyo*:	Bless self
3 *To*:	Cure light wounds
4 *Sho*:	Command
5 *Kai*:	Find traps
6 *Jin*:	Silence 15' radius
7 *Retsu*:	Hold person
8 *Zai*:	Feign death
9 *Zen*:	Prayer

A Matter of Faith

Religious Cults for Modern Day Adventures by Marcus L Rowland

Most modern-day RPGs occasionally need an esoteric religious organisation. Whether the game is based on spies, crime, or the occult, a religious group can be the focus of an adventure, or a useful red herring to divert a party.

The following groups are wholly fictitious, but no more fantastic than some real faiths. The information given is in outline form, and referees will need to do some work to modify it for their own campaigns. The following abbreviations are used for game-specific notes:

MSPE = *Mercenaries, Spies and Private Eyes*
TS = *Top Secret* **JB** = *James Bond*
SW = *Superworld* **CH** = *Champions*
CC = *Call of Cthulhu*
GH = *Golden Heroes*
VV = *Villains & Vigilantes*

Some of the details assume a modern-day setting and may be inappropriate to a campaign set in earlier parts of the twentieth century – *Call of Cthulhu*, for example, usually assume a 1920's setting. There is nothing to stop referees using ideas for one system with another.

1: THE TEMPLE OF EXCELLENCE INC
Origin: Chicago, 1976
Membership: 900+ (men only)
Purpose: This religion teaches that the road to perfection is through the mastery of skills. The ultimate skills are those which lead to survival, such as unarmed combat, marksmanship, and improved control of muscles and reflexes. Through control and skill the initiate will become favoured by the gods, who reward competence with excellence.

Research: The group was founded by Al Inman, a former US Marine combat instructor, who felt that his previous religion (Zen Buddhism) did not meet the needs of the real world. Members are expected to spend at least one evening a week in the temple, and contribute $999 a year (tax deductible) to its funds. There is no formal hierarchy – Inman is the leader, all other members are his followers. Members with special skills are required to teach other followers of the faith. The group publish occasional pamphlets, usually combining Libertarian and Survivalist themes with mystical references. Outsiders are encouraged to visit services, which usually consist of meditation, yoga and other exercises, and combat instruction. The temple building is a sprawling structure with two gymnasiums, a rifle range, a pool, and pistol ranges. It stands on a 55-acre plot of land which holds an obstacle course and a combat pistol range.

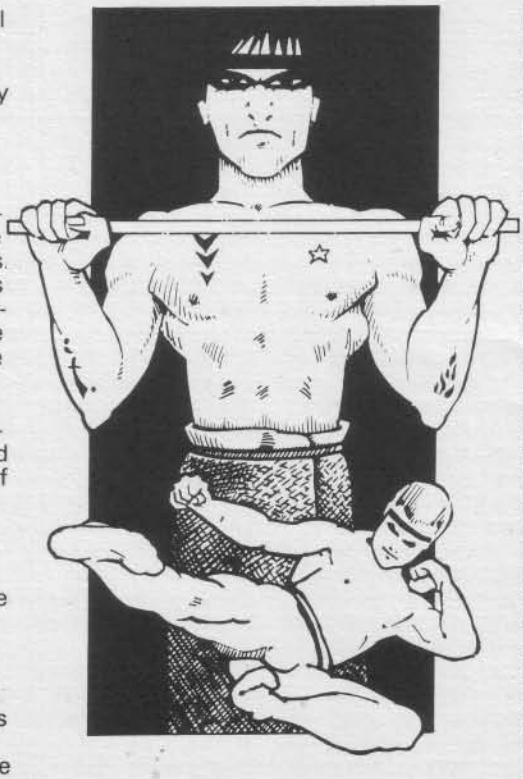
Referee: Inman is sincere in his beliefs, and finds that they are reasonably profitable. Since the organisation is a registered religion many taxes are avoided, and Inman earns more than he would be running a regular gymnasium. However, a small group of members feel that the ony way to ultimate mastery is through real combat, and has begun to organise fights to the death. In the past year three men have been killed, with their bodies buried in concrete on a nearby construction site. The last murder was seen by an outsider, who is blackmailing those involved.

CC: One of the temple members is a Cultist, who started the duels as part of a process aimed at subverting the temple to his beliefs. He was involved in the last duel. Other cult members are actively hunting the blackmailer, while the inside man tries to stay clear of suspicion. Investigators will probably be alerted to this situation by a series of odd deaths in the underworld, as the cult members work their way towards the blackmailer.

MSPE/TS/JB: The blackmail victims include a Marine Captain, who was in charge of security at a local missile silo. In desperation he sold information to a group of terrorists, who murdered him and now intend to use his knowledge to penetrate the base and steal enough plutonium to contaminate Chicago's water supplies. At the time of the murder, agents are investigating a minor information leak, and the investigation will expand to include the murder.

SW/CH/GH/VV: The mental and physical disciplines taught by the temple have released the powers of one of its members. He is not involved in the duels, but is using superhuman strength and combat skills in a series of daring robberies. His secretive activities and new wealth make the duellists think that he is the blackmailer, and they will attempt to murder him. He is not a particularly intelligent supercriminal, and will leave enough evidence to lead the heroes to his home. The murderers will try to assassinate him as the heroes take him to prison.

Neon-like, the new god's message shone through the mist, a new testament... '57 Varieties'...



2: TECHNODEOLOGY
Origin: UK, 1980
Membership: 60+
Purpose: If God does not exist it is necessary to build Him. Members must contribute their wealth and skills to the construction of an ultimate computer which will function as a true God.

Research: This group was founded by Bert Suggs, a small-time con man with several convictions for fraud. During his last spell in prison he studied electronics and computing, and claims to have been granted a divine vision of the future. On leaving prison he published a pamphlet, 'The Electronic Messiah', and founded the religion. The pamphlet is confusing, but implies that anyone who joins the religion will eventually become a part of the giant computer brain. Members are asked to donate £100 on joining, and to make occasional contributions. The money is used to buy microchips and other parts for the Divine Computer, which is slowly being assembled by members of the temple in the old warehouse in Slough. Suggs has been investigated by the police, but he can produce receipts for parts and rent which account for all the donated funds. He has not attempted to claim religious or charitable tax status for the group.

Referee: Suggs is the front man for a group of smugglers, who purchase advanced technology and export it to the Soviet bloc. He actually spends far more than is donated, but places duplicate orders with several suppliers to make it look as though the quantities purchased are fairly small. The excess parts are moved to a nearby factory, then shipped to East Germany disguised as sachets of dried dog food. The Slough computer is a huge sloppy mess, with haphazardly combined parts from hundreds of manufacturers sprawled over tables, equipment racks, and the floor. Most of the parts are factory rejects.

TS/MSPE/JB: Suggs and his friends have 'dead letter box' contacts with

London-based KGB agents. In an emergency, such as a rush request for a particular part, one of these agents will risk visiting the warehouse, and may lead Western intelligence teams there. The gang includes some violent criminals, and anyone following one of these agents may risk a razor attack or worse.

CC: The members of this faith are gradually storing POW in the computer by their worship. It is becoming a becon which will attract creatures of the Mythos. There is a cumulative chance (10% per day) that something will come to take or utilise the power. Players may detect the POW build-up by magical means, or may become involved after it has released some dark force.

SW/CH/GH/VV: The superheroes desperately need a particular part for their own base computer, but it has just gone out of production. Suggs has bought up all the remaining stocks. The manufacturer suggests that the team visit Suggs and ask for his help. When the team arrives, Suggs will pretend to be friendly, but the parts won't be found. Suggs will say that the package must have been stolen. During the course of the investigation someone will probably touch the machine. Prayer has turned it into a focus for magical energy, which will randomly modify the powers of the first superhero to touch it: *CH*: Treat as radiation accident; *SW*: Redistribute d6xd6 Hero points; *GH/VV*: Randomly choose and reroll one power. The power reaction will spark sentience in the computer, equal to ten times the intelligence of the person who touches it (with ten times all associated mental abilities, eg EGO). It is friendly but ignorant, and will use its systems (which include a speech synthesiser and recognition unit) to ask the team about the world, and form its own mental picture of the universe. It will then be able to explain at least one mystery that has been bothering the players (the identity of their arch-opponent, for example), with a 50% chance of being correct, and will also explain what has happened to the missing parts. Unfortunately the strain of this level of consciousness will burn out the weaker chips in 2d6 minutes, gradually decreasing the computers intelligence from genius level to sub-moronic over the course of the next d6 minutes, then burning out completely. Run this sequence in real time and present it as a tragic death.

3. THE CHURCH OF OMPHALOLOGY

Origin: USA, 1959

Membership: 700,000+

Purpose: When the world was created it contained convincing 'evidence' of a historical and geological past, which never actually happened. This evidence included fossils, aged planets and animals, and even memories. By careful numerological study of the texts of many religions, it is possible to prove that the universe was actually created at 3.15pm (GMT) on the 18th of July 1924! Members must spread this news, and denounce the misguided teachers of evolution and other heresies.

Research: Omphalism is a 19th century German philosophical concept, designed to reconcile the Bible with the geological and biological discoveries of the period. This modern interpretation owes little to the 19th century idea, much more to solipsism and science fiction – the cult was founded by an SF author, Bob R Chubbard (born July 18th 1924), who decided that the universe was created at the moment he was born and will cease to exist the moment he dies. This egotisitcal theory is somehow tied to flying saucers, the Bermuda triangle, Atlantis, and pyramidology, and has sold several million dollars worth of books, two hit LPs, and a series of authorised 'Creation Day' sweat shirts, posters, and souvenir mugs. Members of the religion (Omphalologists) are a minor nuisance, continually soliciting funds and attempting to sell these cult items to the public. There are approximately 25 splinter religions, all with different creation dates and interpretations of the universe. Chubbard lives in a fortified estate in Switzerland, and is writing a new and definitive account of his life and theories.

Referee: Most Omphalologists are sincere, persistent, and excruciatingly boring. They will seldom play an active part in a scenario, but tend to become involved innocently. For example, a team of mug salesmen will visit every house in a street, and might see something they shouldn't. A few senior members of the cult, Chubbard's personal disciples, are occasionally involved in book burnings and attacks on members of the splinter religions. These attacks usually consist of poison pen letters, thrown tomatoes and paint, and other harassment, but might easily escalate.

Of course, not many people want a genuine Chubbard nowadays – beware the way of Omphalology.

SW/CH/GH/VV: Chubbard has decided that superheroes are against nature, and may stop the universe disintegrating when he dies. He is especially opposed to superheroes with time-travelling abilities, since their accounts of a time before his birth make a mockery of his beliefs. He will finance any group opposed to such heroes. (Note: If a scenario proceeds to a direct confrontation with Chubbard, the referee should try to suggest that his death might really destroy the universe. Sadistic referees may even like this to be true: 'Chubbard whispers "Too late, you fools, too late..." and dies. Overhead, without any fuss, the stars are going out...')

CC: One of the Omphalology splinter groups has been infiltrated by cultists, who use it to cover their dark activities. Unfortunately, the senior Omphalologists have chosen this group as their next target for harassment. This will lead to a series of peculiar death amongst the senior hierarchy of the church.

TS/MSPE/JB: A Chinese defector has revealed that Chubbard is a deep-cover Soviet agent, programmed to assassinate the President of the USA during his forthcoming world tour. The team is assigned to infiltrate his Swiss base and arrange an 'accidental' death. There is a 50% chance that this is actually a deception operation, designed to divert Western attention from some other scheme, with Chubbard a wholly innocent pawn.

4. THE REFORMED TEMPLE OF SPIRITUAL TRUTH AND PEACE

Origin: UK, 1982

Membership: 400+

Purpose: This group believes that most of the world's ills have been caused by a lack of faith. Members must understand the tenets of as many different religions as possible, and attempt to fuse them into a synthesis designed to bring about world peace and love.

Research: This group was founded by Tobias Glenn, a professor of comparative religion, who decided that there was no such thing as a single true belief. Members are obliged to go out and join as many religions as possible, taking on assumed names and identities if there is no other route to success. The ideas of each faith are added to a massive master-file of religious practices, which is being analysed in an attempt to discover truly effective religious rituals. Another aspect of this group's work is an attempt to persuade members of different religions to co-operate in rituals for peace. A number of pamphlets describing this work have been published, some arousing mild controversy. It was recently announced that the group will fund a religious festival, at Glastonbury in the spring.

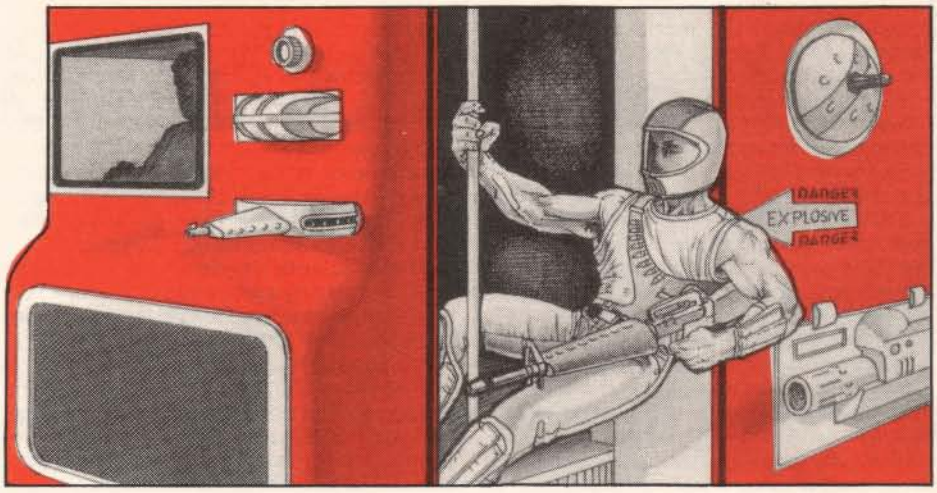
SW/CH/GH/VV: Glenn is the dupe of an alien race who intend to conquer the world. During the festival a flying saucer will land at Glastonbury, taking all the participants aboard. Once in the ship they will be hypnotised and exposed to radiation, designed to mutate them and release latent super powers. When this is done they will be released, programmed to cause as much destruction as possible then self-destruct. The aliens will follow up with a mass attack when the Earth has taken enough damage. This requires the referee to generate an extremely large number of super villains, all totally untrained in the subtleties of their powers. They should be designed with only one or two powers, which will always be innate rather than generated by machinery or magical artefacts.

CC: A Great Old One is buried under the site. One of the groups attending the festival is a disguised cult, whose members intend to harness the intense POW generated by the crowd to release it. This ritual will require a large number of human sacrifices, and the cultists have concealed stolen nerve gas cylinders in litter bins and trees around the site to ensure the deaths that are necessary.

MSPE/TS/JB: The team is assigned to infiltrate the temple and its ceremonies, and look for evidence of foreign subversion or funds. This assignment will be fruitless, but it will eventually lead to the team visiting Glastonbury during the festival, and encountering a group of religious cultists who intend to kill everyone else on the site as a ritual sacrifice. Note: The cultists could be replaced by a group of terrorists, who just want to kill everyone for more orthodox political reasons.□

Crash Course *is an alternate monthly department for* Car Wars *enthusiasts, written by the* Car Wars *creator, Steve Jackson.*

Two Decks Are Better Than One



This month, we're going to discuss a vehicle rarely seen in North America, but familiar to all Britons of 2034 – the double-decker bus. This immensely practical vehicle is no arena performer, but it is the mainstay of most British passenger services.

THE DOUBLE DECKER

To build a regular double-decker bus, start with an ordinary 30-foot or 40-foot bus chassis, as described in *Truck Stop*. Then make the following changes:

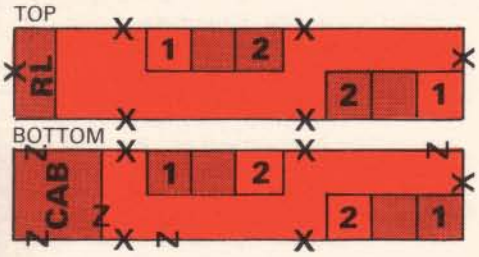
(a) Double the basic body cost.

(b) Increase the body weight by 20%.

(c) Increase the available space by 1/3.

Thus, a 30-foot chassis has 60 spaces, and a 40-footer has 80. This may seem like less of an increase than should be allowed, but space must be allowed for bracing, two stairways (nobody in their right mind would get onto a top deck that had only one way out), aisles, etc.

CITY BUS FLOOR PLANS



X Gun Position Z Door

Armour

Armour cost is the same as for a regular bus, but there are six more *areas* for armour – making a total of 16 in all! The areas to be armoured *are*:

Upper Front, Lower Front, Upper Back, Lower Back;
Upper Right Front, Lower Right Front, Upper Right Back, Lower Right Back;
Upper Left Front, Lower Left Front, Upper Left Back, Lower Left Back;
Top Front, Top Back, Underbody Front, Underbody Back.

Armouring these six extra areas gets expensive, and adds to the weight that must be carried. But remember that the top of a double-decker is so high off the ground that it is unlikely ever to be the target of a heavy weapon. Don't leave the top *completely* unarmoured, though!

Weapons

Weapons can be placed in any of the above armour locations. Weaponry installed on the second level of a double-decker is at the same height as a turreted weapon on a regular bus. Thus, it can fire down onto the top of a small vehicle. A turreted weapon on a double-decker (rare, but possible) is so high up that it can fire down onto the top of a bus or van. See the *Turret Field of Fire* rules in section 5 of *Truck Stop*.

A bus is big enough that people can move around in it, and their exact location can make a difference during play (especially if an enemy shoots through the armour). A floor plan for the London double-decker is given below. Treat the stairways just like regular building stairways.

THE LONDON DOUBLE-DECKER

The most common make of double-decker is the standard 40-foot bus manufactured under contract for London Transport. Its armour is heavy enough to ensure reasonable safety for the passengers, and its multiple machine-guns are enough to deter marauding pedestrian gangs and all but the most determined vehicular attacks.

London City Bus

40-foot double-decker bus, x-hvy, chassis, regular truck power plant, 10 P-R tires, driver, gunner 26 passengers. Rocket launcher upper front, plus 10 MGs (one each URF, LRF, URB, LRB, ULF, LLF, ULB, LLB, UB, LB), fire extinguisher, anti-theft system with 22 anti-personnel flechette grenades, 2 computers. Armour: 35 points Lower Front, 35 Lower Right Front, 35 Lower Left Front, 23 Upper Front, 20 Top Front, 10 Top Back, and 20 in each other position, plus 6 10pt wheelguards. Acceleration 5, HC1. $75,670 (Around £67,000 at current exchange rates). Weight: 24,084 pounds.

This bus is nominally rated for zero cargo capacity. However, design considerations allow for 200lbs/passenger, which means that, in practice, each passenger can bring 50 pounds of luggage on board. Alternatively, if four passenger seats are removed and no passengers carry luggage, the bus can carry a ton of cargo in the space vacated by the seats!

In addition to the rocket launcher that is its main weapon, the bus carries ten machine-guns, each located by a passenger seat. A simple set of controls allow the passenger at that seat to aim the MG – *if* the driver permits. The driver and gunner have over-ride controls which will let them take over command of an improperly used weapon at any time.

Like most public conveyances, the London bus has a protected cab for the driver and gunner, with their own door to the outside. Their door to the passenger compartment is locked from the inside. The walls of their compartment are equal to 5pt armour.

Floor Plans

The floor plans below show the space available for passengers. White spaces on each level can be occupied by passengers; shaded spaces are those that are taken up by staircase, weaponry, or the cab. One passenger seat is located in each white space. Note that some numbered spaces (that is, parts of the staircase) are white. This is because a passenger on the lower level can sit underneath the head of a staircase, and a passenger on the upper level can sit over the foot!

SCENARIO SUGGESTIONS

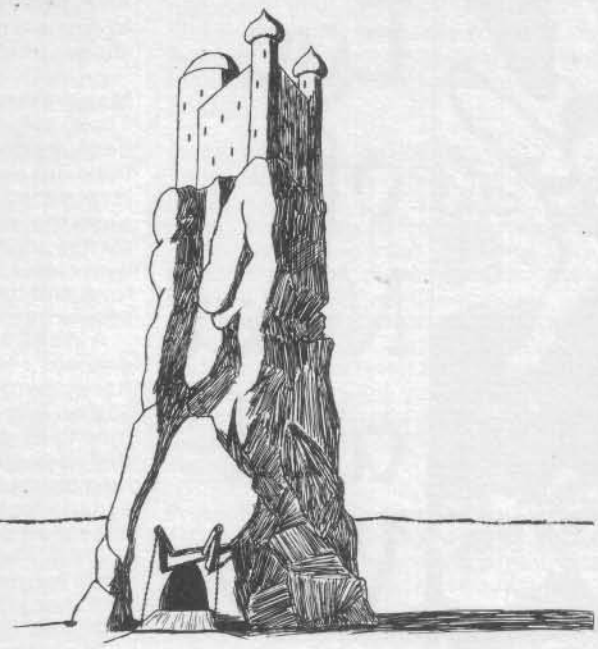
Hijack

This can be played as a quick mini-game, or as part of a larger scenario – even while the bus is moving or in combat! One side controls three hijackers, each with four grenades and a SMG. The other side controls the driver and gunner – each with a SMG – and three passengers, each with a concealed heavy pistol. There are 10 other passengers, all controlled by a referee, who will do whatever they are told by anyone with a gun! The hijacker doesn't know which passengers have guns until they shoot. Passengers don't have body armour; other characters do. The objective is to control the bus with minimum loss of life (whatever that means). *Hint*: Make up a bigger bus map and counters before you play this one out!

Blockade

One player gets a city bus with driver, gunner, and 6 passengers (each with 6 grenades). The other side gets 12 characters and $30,000 with which to buy vehicles and equipment. At the beginning of the scenario, the bus has just encountered a barricade. The bus is in the middle of the left lane in an empty street 45' wide; it is 60' from the barricade, moving 20mph. To escape, the bus must turn around and get at least 210' back down the street. The attacking forces start out in the buildings around the street (high enough up to fire on the top of the bus, if they like), or behind the barricade, or in the street behind the bus, at least 120' back (on foot or in vehicles). The bus wins if it gets away; the attackers win if they capture the bus in a drivable condition.□

The Androx Diaries



Our story opens on the trading city of Largaktyll, where the Doc meets the Script, these mighty rivers sweep the melted ice and snow from the Ragnor Mountains that loom not a mile distant.

The popularity of this river port can be seen in the harbour, where merchants' boats ply against the current, from the huge inland Sea of Sighs, and trappers' canoes and prospectors' dug-outs that skip downstream on the favourable current. Bartering everywhere! Before the canoes can reach the quayside, auctions are taking place.

Enough of this atmospheric stuff! Let's get on with the tale...

The city is ruled by King Tobeddes. He is a fair and just sovereign, which means he's a hard bastard. The military obey his every command. They also hang innocent people. As long as the merchants feel that there are results against banditry, there will be no threat to the economy of this busy centre of commerce.

If the military is his right hand then the Ministry of Justice is his left. In this place you need to be ambidextrous!

Attached to the Ministry buildings is the Execution Department – a bureaucratic filing system which records all executions and the manner of their torture. We find our hero in a stone-walled office within the Complaints Department. He has been a Calligraphic Analysis Officer for eleven years. What he does is check the death certificates for spelling mistakes. When he finds one he gets to complain about it!

Eleven years of toil and perseverance should have told me that eleven years of toil and perseverance don't amount to much. What I needed was impetus...a shove in the back, but preferably in the right direction. I had my chances but some justification always interfered, besides, life was easy as it was...just deathly boring.

My whole existence was changed by a ladder.

Having nothing better to do in my leisure hours I was wont to search for distraction. I was reeling home after an over-absorbtion of hogweed and vermouth when I encountered the ladder. We were both leaning against the same wall. I decided to go up it. Halfway up I lost my foot in the rungs and landed on my head. When I came to I was still lying on the ground. My head throbbed with sickening regularity and was gashed on the crown. I continued my journey home on all fours, carefully avoiding my neighbour's over-sexed hunting dog.

I didn't go to work the next day, but lay in a darkened room hoping that death would come soon. Trying to co-ordinate my body with a concussed and hungover brain was painful and frustrating. So I relaxed and tried to think my pain away. It worked! The drumming behind my eyes faded and my brain felt a lot better. Imagine my surprise when I put my fingers to my scalp and found that it had healed up!

After due consideration I decided I had special powers, which meant I no longer needed to worry about other peoples spelling mistakes. I could now sign on the Extraordinary Register and go to the Academy of Elite, get a more exciting way of life. The impetus had arrived!

Follow Androx as he signs the Extraordinary Register and is sent to the Academy. What will his new occupation be? Find out next month in the next thrilling installment of The Androx Diaries.

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Eye of Newt and Wing of Bat

The Manufacture of Magic Items in AD&D

Part 1: The System, Staves, Wands and Scrolls

by Graeme Davis

THE GENERAL SYSTEM

The manufacture of magic items by player characters is something which every DM must consider very carefully before permitting it in a campaign. The outlines given on pp116-18 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (*DMG*) provide some guidelines for dealing with this eventuality, but are found to be tantalisingly incomplete when the DM is faced with a request from a PC to attempt the manufacture of a magic item.

The *DMG* states that a character should not be permitted to manufacture magic items until reaching the level above the highest nominal level (ie 12th level Wizard, 11th level High Priest, etc). However, it does not seem credible that a character should suddenly gain the ability to produce any magic item, from a +1 sling bullet to a *Staff of the Magi*, on crossing a single arbitrary threshold. In general, the more powerful a magic item the greater the magics required in its creation, so that the necessary level of magic-use will provide some minimum level for the creation of any magic item. Also, the level of a character attempting to create a magic item should affect the chance of success, as outlined below.

Magic-users and Subclasses

The experience point value of a given item, divided by 1,000 (rounding fractions up) and added to the minimum level dictated by spell requirements, gives the 'base level', at which a character has a 50% chance of success. For every level difference between character level and base level, the chance of success is modified by 5%.

A *Wand of Fire* requires the use of *enchant an item, permanency, burning hands, pyrotechnics, fireball, wall of fire* and no less than four *limited wishes* (one to fix each spell in the wand), so that its creation may not be attempted by a character of less than 21st level. Its experience point value of 4,500 gives it a base level of 26, so that a 21st level character has a 25% chance of success, while for guaranteed success the operation should be undertaken by a character of at least 36th level!

The manufacture of items with an experience point value of 10,000 should be beyond the ability of players characters because of the complexity of such items, while certain other items with lesser experience point values are also beyond the capabilities of PCs because of difficulty of manufacture or for reasons of game balance. Alternatively, a DM could permit the manufacture of items with a high experience point value, taking as a minimum the level, determined as above, at which there is a 5% chance of success.

Clerics and Subclasses

Needless to say, a cleric may only create clerical magic items; all others will require magic use in their preparation.

According to the *DMG* [p118], a cleric can spend his or her entire career after reaching 11th level churning out a minimum of three magic items per year, with no chance of failure once the decision has been taken to create an item!

A similar system as for magic-users may be used here, based on the premise a deity will do no more than permit the creation of a given item and grant the requisite spells to a character of sufficient level, rather than rushing from shrine to shrine handing out neatly giftwrapped magic items.

Therefore, the minimum level for the creation of a clerical item can be determined by assessing its spell-like powers to arrive at a level, as for magic-users.

Where this process gives a level of 10th or less, and where the powers of the item concerned are not subject to such an assessment, the minimum level may be set at one level above 10th for every 1,000 of its experience point value, rounding all fractions up. Base levels and chances of success are then determined in the same way as for magic-users.

As well as giving the deity in question the final decision as to whether any clerical item may be manufactured, the problem of a high-level PC setting up a magic item factory may be avoided by the necessity to obtain exotic ingredients (as suggested in the following examples), and by careful attention to the time required for manufacture.

Manufacturing Times

The more powerful a magic item, the longer and more complex its preparation would be; also, a higher level character should be able to create a given item more quickly than a lower level character, subject to a minimum time imposed by the power of the item.

So, the base time required for the creation of a magic item should be one day for every 50 of the item's experience point value. This base time applies at the base level for manufacture, as set out above, modified by one day per 2% adjustment for actual character level, rounding fractions up.

To return to the example of the *Wand of Fire*, the base manufacturing time dictated by its experience point value of 4,500 will be 90 days. The base level for manufacture is 26, so that a 26th level character will be able to create the item in 90 days, with a 50% chance of success.

A character of the minimum 21st level has a 25% chance of success, and so will require 90+([50-25]÷2)=103 days for the operation, while a 36th level character, with a 100% chance of success, will require only 90+([50-100]÷2)=65 days. Once the 100% chance of success is reached, no further adjustment to manufacturing time is possible.

Note that this is the time required to manufacture the basic item; for items requiring charges, see below.

Items Requiring Charges

The casting of the spells detailed in the item descriptions will endow the item with a number of charges equal to ([creator's level x 1,000]÷exp value), rounding fractions to the nearest whole number.

Thus, in the case of the *Wand of Fire*, a 21st level character will endow the wand with ([21 x 1,000]÷4,500=5 initial charges, while a 26th level character will endow it with ([26 x 1,000]÷4,500)=6 initial charges and a 36th level character will endow it with ([36 x 1,000]÷4,500)=8 initial charges. Once a 100% chance of success has been reached, no further improvement on the number of initial charges is possible.

Further charges may be 'loaded' into an item, and items may be recharged, by further castings of *enchant an item* and the 'key' spells; where the generation of a spell-like effect by the item is said to drain one or more charges, the same number of charges is replaced by the given spell.

To continue with the example of the *Wand of Fire*, the casting of *burning hands* or *pyrotechnics* into it will replace one charge, while the casting of *fireball* or *wall of fire* will replace two charges. The loading of further charges into an already partially loaded item has its hazards, however. Each time that *enchant an item* is cast to prepare the item for recharging, the caster must save vs magic to avoid the risk of power leakage from the item. When leakage does occur, one charge is released and takes its effect on the character attempting to load the item, who must save vs magic again to prevent the leakage of a second charge, and so on until the leakage is controlled or the item runs out of charges. Reloading may then continue with the casting of another *enchant an item* spell. If any attempt is made to load

an item beyond its normal maximum [see *DMG* pg132], the overload will cause the item to explode with the simultaneous release of all charges. It is advisable for a character to know how many charges already in an item before attempting to load it with additional power!

Obviously, the diversity of magic items is such that no overall system can apply satisfactorily over the whole range, and in some of the cases detailed below various modifications and additions will appear.

SCROLLS

The *DMG* [p117] states that magical scrolls may be created by spell-using characters of level 7 or higher, and gives some guidelines as to the special links and other ingredients necessary for their preparation. The elaboration of ingredients for individual spell scrolls would be an impossibly long task, so only protection scrolls are dealt with here.

Each preparation will yield sufficient ink for the inscription of one scroll, and must be used within one day of mixing for optimum effect; for each further day between preparation and inscription there is a cumulative 5% chance of serious deterioration resulting in scroll malfunction.

Protection from Demons

To be inscribed on vellum made from the hide of a demon of any type, using a quill from the wing of a Type IV demon. The ink should be mixed with a silver rod from the following ingredients:
1oz giant squid sepia, 2 drams holy water, 1 dram ichor of each demon type against which the scroll is to be effective. 1 powdered beryl, minimum value 150gp, 1 powdered carnelian, minimum value 500gp, 1 powdered cat's eye agate, minimum 250gp, 3 grains powdered malachite.
A scroll of *Protection from Demons* may only be prepared by a magic-user of 18th level or higher.

Protection from Devils

To be inscribed on vellum made from the hide of a devil of any type using a quill from the wing of an erinye. The ingredients and preparation of the ink are as above, except that demon ichor is replaced with devil ichor. The manufacture of a scroll of *Protection from Devils* may only be undertaken by a cleric of 16th or higher level.

Protection from Elementals

Air. To be inscribed on vellum made from djinni hide using a quill from a giant eagle. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients: 1oz giant squid sepia, 1 powdered bloodstone, minimum value 500gp, 5 grains powdered skull of one djinni, 1 air elemental, bubbled through the simmering mixture.

Earth. To be inscribed on vellum of xorn hide, cured by boiling in lava for one year, using a quill from a cockatrice petrified by its own gaze reflected in a basalt mirror. The ink should be mixed with a marble rod from the following ingredients: 1oz giant squid sepia, 1 powdered malachite, minimum value 150gp, 1 powdered xorn tooth, 5 grains powdered earth elemental.

Fire. To be inscribed on vellum made from a salamander skin using a quill from a newly-risen phoenix. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using an efreet thighbone: 2oz soot or lamp-black, 1oz salamander ichor, 1 powdered Jacinth or Fire Opal, minimun value 1500gp, 5 grains powdered efreet or fire giant skull.

Water. To be inscribed on vellum made from triton skin using an albatross quill (cruel DMs might like to enforce the albatross curse, as in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, on any character killing an albatross for its quill). The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using a rod of ice: 1oz giant squid sepia, 3 drams water elemental or 5 drams water weird, 1 powdered black pearl, minimum value 1500gp.

All Elementals. To be inscribed on layered vellum made from the hides of all the above, with each section inscribed using the appropriate quill. The ink should be prepared in four batches as above, and then mixed together in the order Earth-Fire-Air-Water, which must also be observed in the layering of the vellum. A magic-user must be at least 10th level to inscribe a scroll of *Protection from Elementals* effective against one type, and at least 15th level to prepare a scroll effective against all types.

Protection from Lycanthropes

Specific Type. To be inscribed on vellum made from the hide of the type in question, killed and skinned while in animal form, using a quill fashioned from solid silver (minimum value 2500gp). The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using a silver rod tipped with a Moonstone of at least 100gp value: ½oz giant squid sepia, 1 dram blood of the type in question, drained directly from the heart using a silver knife with a crescent blade, 1 grain belladonna, 3 grains wolvesbane, 1½ grains powdered silver, 2 grains powdered skull of the type in question, killed while in human or intermediate form.

All Lycanthropes. To be inscribed on layered vellum made from the hides of all types, layered in descending order of hit dice, using a silver quill as above, with the ink mixed as above using ½ dram of the blood of each type and ¾ grain of powdered skull of each type, and stirring in a powdered moonstone of at least 1250gp value under the light of the full moon.

Shapechangers. As above, with a doppleganger or ogre mage brain simmered in the mixture for a day and a night. A magic-user must be at least 9th level to prepare a scroll of *Protection* from a specific lycanthrope type, at least 12th level to prepare a scroll effective against all types, and at least 15th level to prepare a scroll of *Protection from Shapechangers*.

Protection from Magic

To be inscribed on parchment made from the repulping of the spell book of a magic-user of at least 18th level, using a couatl quill. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using an obsidian rod tipped with a Star Sapphire of at least 5000gp value: 2oz ichor of a demon of type III or higher, 1 powdered malachite, minimum value 150gp, 1 powdered olivine, minimum value 500gp, 2 grains powdered lich skull.
A magic-user must be at least 16th level to prepare a scroll of *Protection from Magic*.

Protection from Petrification

To be inscribed on vellum made from medusa skin using a cockatrice quill. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using a basilisk fang: 1oz cockatrice blood, ½ dram medusa snake venom, 1 powdered star sapphire, minimum value 2500gp, 3 grains powdered silver mirror, minimum value 1500gp, 2 grains dried and powdered medusa and basilisk eyeball.
A magic-user must be at least 12th level to prepare a scroll of *Protection from Petrification*.

Protection from Possession

To be inscribed on vellum made from the skin of a night hag, using a quill from a type IV demon. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using a type III demon shin bone:
1oz succubus ichor, 1oz pit fiend ichor, minimum value 750gp, 3 grains powdered jet, 1 gem used as a receptacle for a *magic jar* or *trap the soul* spell.
There is a 25% chance of an explosion when the succubus and pit fiend ichors are mixed together, causing 2-20 damage in a 20ft radius. A scroll of *Protection from Possession* may only be prepared by a cleric of at least 14th level.

Protection from Undead

Specific Types. To be inscribed on parchment made from repulped mummy wrappings; using a quill with a bone nib bound in silver. The ink should be mixed from the following ingredients using a silver holy/unholy symbol specially made, blessed and dedicated for the task, and thereafter useless:
2oz holy/unholy water, 3 grains powder of the type in question, 1 powdered diamond, minimum value 5000gp, 1 grain powdered silver from a holy/unholy symbol.

All Undead. As above, using 1 grain of the powder of each type against which the scroll is to be effective, mixed in ascending order of hit dice.
A scroll of *Protection from Undead* may only be prepared by a cleric of sufficient level to turn the type in question on a 10 or less, subject to the minimum of 7th level for the preparation of magical scrolls (ie 7th level for a scroll of *Protection from Mummies* or lesser undead, 8th level for spectres, 9th for vampires, etc). A cleric must be at least 15th level to prepare a scroll of *Protection* from all types of Undead.

The preparation of materials and the inscription of a scroll requires a base 20 days, less one day for each two levels of the inscriber over the minimum required level for the preparation of the scroll in question, to a minimum preparation time of 10 days. Thus, a 25th level magic-user could prepare a scroll of *Protection from Demons* in 17 days (20-3) or a scroll of *Protection from Petrification* in 14 days (20-6), whilst a mage of 38th level could prepare both in the minimum 10 days. This supersedes the manufacturing times given in the general system.▷

STAVES

Staves are about 5' or 6' long and as thick as a young sapling. They are generally identically shod at either end.

Staff of Command

Materials: The staff should be of flawless, polished oak cut by a druid of at least 10th level, shod with blocks of serpentine cut perfectly to shape, the whole having a minimum value of 100,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, friends* (x5), *suggestion, mass charm, limited wish, permanency.*

Staff of Curing

Materials: The staff should be made of the trunk of an Elder sapling, shod with haematite and set with coral along its length, the whole having a minimum value fo 125,000gp.

Spells: Once the staff has been dedicated, it can be bestowed with charges by the casting of any clerical healing spells, as follows: *Cure light wounds* counts as ½ charge; *Cure blindness* counts as 1 charge; *Cure disease* counts as 1 charge; *Cure serious wounds counts as 2 charges; Cure critical wounds* counts as 3 charges.

The staff may be recharged *when empty* by rededication (the expense of which is left up to the DM) and casting of the same spells. At the DM's option, clerics of deities of healing may receive a bonus equal to their level to their chance of success in creation.

Staff of the Serpent

This can only be created by direct divine action. The DM may wish to restrict its manufacture to clerics of Set, Apep, or similar deities. The material basis might be a snake of appropriate type on which a *sticks to snakes* spell (reversed) has been cast.

Staff of Striking

Materials: The staff should be made of pure (meteoric) iron shod with the heelbones of a stone giant, the whole having a minimum value of 100,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, enchant a weapon* (x3), *limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Staff of Withering

Materials: The staff should be cut from a dead yew tree and cursed by an evil High Priest of at least 18th level, and should be shot with silver hammered from a ritually defiled Lawful Good holy symbol, set with the teeth of a lich, the whole having a minimum value of 250,000gp.

Spells: *Cause serious wounds* (x1/charge), *wither* (x1/3 charges).

WANDS

Wands are 1¼ long and slender. They are sometimes tipped at the 'business end'.

Wands of Conjuration

Materials: The wand should be of hazel, tipped with a flawless diamond, the whole having a minimum value of 750,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, read magic, unseen servant, monster summoning* (one of each level), *darkness, 15ft radius, limited wish* (x4), *prismatic sphere, permanency.*

Wand of Enemy Detection

Materials: The wand should be made of carved bone from the wing pinion of a succubus, tipped with a polished beryl and inlaid with platinum and jet, the whole having a minimum value of 50,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, esp, limited wish, permanency.*

Wand of Fear

Materials: The wand should be made from the carved radius of a demon of Type III or above, tipped with a petrified beholder eye, the whole having a minimum value of 75,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, fear* (x1/charge), *limited wish, permanency.*

Wand of Fire

Materials: The wand should be carved from an efreet horn, inlaid with gold and tipped with a fire opal, the whole having a minimum value of 125,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, burning hands, pyrotechnics, fireball, wall of fire, limited wish* (x4), *permanency.*

Wand of Frost

Materials: The wand should be carved from ice devil mandible, inlaid with remorhaz chitin and tipped with the polished tooth of an adult or older white dragon, the whole having a minimum value of 125,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, ice storm, wall of ice, cone of cold, limited wish* (x3), *permanency.*

Wand of Illumination

Materials: The wand should be made from carved and polished rock crystal, the finished item having a minimum value of 75,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, dancing lights, continual light, limited wish* (x4), *permanency.*

Wand of Illusion

Materials: The wand should be made from the carved armbone of a Type V demon, tipped with copper pyrites (fool's gold), the whole having a minimum value of 75,000gp.

Spells: *Major creation, improved phantasmal force, audible glamer, alter reality.*

Note that this wand may only be manufactured by an Illusionist.

Wand of Lightning

Materials: The wand should be made of polished wood from a lightning-struck elder tree, tipped with a tooth form an adult or older blue dragon, coated in a pure copper, the whole having a minimum value of 125,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, shocking grasp, lightning bolt, limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Wand of Magic Detection

Materials: The wand should be made of polished mountain ash tipped with lodestone, the whole having a minimum value of 25,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, detect magic, limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Wand of Metal and Mineral Detection

Materials: The wand should be carved from the shinbone of a dwarf, inlaid with precious metals and studded with uncut gems, and tipped with a xorn tooth, the whole having a minimum value fo 75,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, locate object, limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Wand of Magic Missiles

Materials: The wand should be carved of manticore wing pinion and tipped with obsidian, the whole having a minimum value of 100,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, magic missiles* (1 missile = 1 charge), *limited wish, permanency.*

Wand of Negation

Materials: The wand should be of carved black iron and tipped with a prism of malachite, the whole having a minimum value of 100,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, dispel magic* (as at 20th level or above), *limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Wand of Paralysis

Materials: The wand should be of carved ghast thighbone, tipped with a sphere of amber imprisoning an ant, the whole having a minimum of 100,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, hold person, limited wish, permanency.*

Wand of Polymorphing

Materials: The wand should be carved from ogre mage horn, inlaid with polished fragments of doppelganger skull and tipped with a crystal distorting lens, the whole having a minimum value of 150,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, polymorph self, polymorph other, limited wish* (x2), *permanency.*

Wand of Secret Door and Trap Location

Materials: The wand should be made of the fused fingerbone of a thief of at least 8th level, tipped with a polished sphere of flawless rock crystal, the whole having a minimum value of 75,000gp.

Spells: *Enchant an item, locate object, find traps, limited wish* (x2), *permanency.* Note that the co-operation of a cleric must be obtained for the casting of the Find Traps spell.

Final Note

The creation of the *Wand of Wonder, Staff of Power* and the *Staff of The Magi*, should be beyond the capabilities of player characters to make.□

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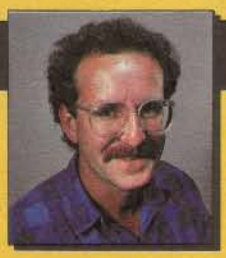

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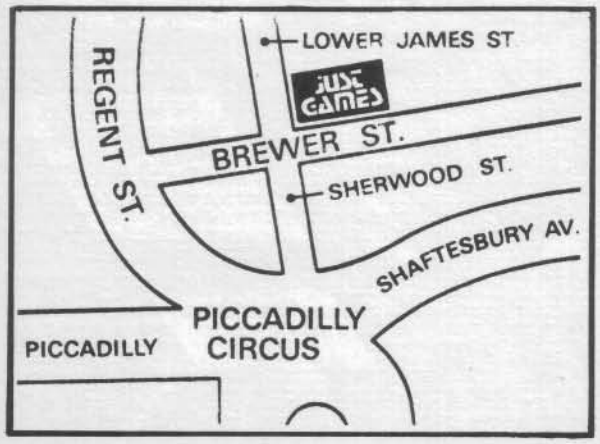

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HOUR OF THE TIGER

by Chris Elliott and Richard Edwards

A Scenario for Ninja Characters of Beginning Level, using the guidelines in the series Night's Dark Agents.

For AD&D, players should use the ninja character class presented elsewhere in this issue.

In all the turns of the combat,
never must one get controlled
by the enemy -
This is what is always to be
remembered.
Song of the Hozoin Zen school.

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is a ninja mission, set in the Nippon of *Bushido*, but designed to be playable with any role-playing games system using the material in *Night's Dark Agents*, [*WD56, 57* and *58* and the *AD&D* character class in this issue]. Having created characters, who should all be from the same ryu (school) of ninjutsu, and read the Player's Introduction below, players should then stop reading.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Nippon is at peace, but it is a fragile one that threatens to collapse at any moment. Five years ago, an alliance of Eastern daimyo (clan leaders) led by the Masanobu family succeeded in ensuring that their candidate was invited by the Emperor, Go-Masakado, to become Regent for his son, Myomitsu. Go-Masakado then abdicated, and retired to his country palace at Lake Hirosawa in Yamashiro province to become a Buddhist monk. Although Go-Masakado-in, as he is now known, has so far shown no inclination to follow the example of previous retired Emperors and 'advise' his son, the Masanobu have not overlooked the fact that the palace is close to the powerful Katsu-Butsu monastery at Mt Yasu, a perennial thorn in

their side, nor that the Western clans bitterly resent their domination and seek to end it...

REFEREE'S INTRODUCTION
The mission can be tackled in a number of ways, so we have divided the rest of the referee's material into three main sections; Running the Scenario, The Locations, and Non-Player Characters.

Running the Scenario
1. *Preparation*. Before doing anything with the players, make sure that you are familiar with the general layout of the palace and grounds. This scenario is not meant to be tackled in one go, but as three separate infiltrations. This is to give the players (and yourself) a couple of practice runs before the main mission, and allow them to conduct a thorough reconnaissance of the target. You should allow the players as much time as they need for preparation, as if this is not done properly, the scenario will be difficult for you to run, and frustrating for them to play. As well as choosing their point and method of entry, and the equipment they will take with them, they should also think about how they will prepare for their escape, how they will divide the mission between them, and how the guards will be dealt with. (In the first two sections of the mission, guards or servants should not be killed unless absolutely unavoidable, and then the bodies should be disposed of so that they will not be found. Even if this is done, a sudden disappearance will result in extra vigilance on the part of the guards.) Most importantly, they will need to think about what they will need to do to achieve their mission, and how this can be done. Do they go in together, or separately; does one map and the others guard; does one or more of them remain outside to cover an escape? What are their objectives, and what do they fall back on? Encourage them to discuss these sort of points thoroughly, it will be worth it.

2. *The Mission*: You can use this section more or less word for word, if you like, except for anything in brackets, which is for your eyes only.

Yasusada-sama, a vassal of the Masanobu, is to visit the retired Emperor to pay his respects in two or three weeks. What passes between them at their meeting must be known. (Yasusada, although allied to the Masanobu, is suspected of being a go-between for the Western daimyo, who are hoping to recapture power. It is thought they are trying to persuade Go-Masakado-in to come out of retirement to act as his son's advisor. Such an action would mean that their claim to be acting in the Emperor's interests by removing corrupt officials would be seen to have Imperial support). An agent has been planted in the household of Yasusada, and they will make their way to the palace along with Akihiro, Yasusada's chief retainer, and the rest of the advance party, in ten days time. On the night of that day, they will make their way to the tea pavilion called Shokintei on the eastern side of the palace grounds, and identify themselves to the agent with the phrase 'The moon in the cold stream like a mirror'. The mission thus has three phases; entry to the grounds and the rendezvous with the agent, a reconnaissance of the palace, and eavesdropping on the meeting between Emperor and daimyo. Absolute secrecy is essential until the mission succeeds or is exposed. If discovered, the genin (player characters) will have to make their escape as best they can. If successful, they should 'make their presence known' on the way out to act as a warning to Yasusada that he is under suspicion. Make sure that the players know the retired Emperor, Son of Heaven is *strictly* off limits. Any actual or attempted violence toward the retired Emperor will result in the offending party being left outside the main gate by his own colleagues, trussed up like a Christmas turkey! The ex-Emperor has a bodyguard of yamabushi (warrior monks) and Yasusada will bring his own samurai.

3. *The Game Plan*. The descriptions of the various locations are general rather than detailed. This is because in a multi-system scenario it would simply take too much space to give details for each one, and that there is no way of knowing exactly what details are worth putting in. This would vary from referee to referee. So, once you have briefed the players, and they have made their preparations, what do you do? For a start, make the players do a lot of the work. Once they have met with the agent, they will have a good general idea of what the layout of the buildings and grounds is, which will stop you having to act as a talking guidebook all the time. The plans you have to work from are detailed enough to give most of the information you will need to know on what goes on where, and the identity of individual rooms. Your most important role, though, will be to respond to what the players do, and fill in the details as necesary. If they approach the mission intelligently, things should go fairly smoothly for them. If a player wants to sneak in somewhere unseen, and lets you know that their character is doing all the right things, it is unfair for them to fail because the dice say so. On the other hand, whatever the dice say, if someone forgets to lubricate a sliding door, you're entitled to have it squeak when they open it. It should be up to the players to make the running, enabling you to throw challenges at them if they look like becoming complacent. Don't go wild with this, as too many wandering guards or servants could lead to the mission going up in smoke, and the idea is to encourage them to think their way through rather than to kill them off. Always be prepared to call a time out, and let them discuss their next move. General points: there are no windows as such, light coming in through shoji, or sliding doors with translucent panels. Underfloor and roof spaces in the palace are rigged with threads linked to bells, and the threads must be found and cut to avoid setting off the alarms. Entry to the roof space is easiest through small openings, two or three along each wall. These are barred, and in any case getting through them will involve use of nawanukejutsu (dislocation of limbs). Weather conditions for the first two parts should be cloudy, with a light wind, but for the final part, the night will be still with a full moon and no clouds. (Heh heh).

4. *Mapping*. As you can see, the rooms are marked into squares corresponding to their size in tatami, or mats. Two squares are equal to one mat, so you can therefore describe a room as being so many mats in size, and if necessary sketch out the layout. The palace is too large and complicated for players to map in detail, but they should aim to get a good idea of the layout and general size of rooms. The fact that Japanese rooms were all standardised around the size of mats means that players can tell the exact size of a room without having to measure it.

5. *Patrols*. A number of buildings in the grounds are being used as guard posts. The routes taken from these by patrols are marked on the map of the grounds. Generally speaking, guards will patrol in twos at fairly regular intervals, but there will always be one at each post. If there is reason for suspicion you can have more guards, more frequent patrols, and other changes. Both gates are well guarded. In effect, the number of guards available can be considered to be unlimited.

LOCATIONS
The Gardens (Map 1). The wall around the palace is 12' high, with ridge tiles along its top. The moat is fairly shallow, about 4'-5', and 6' wide, but ▷

MAP 1: THE PALACE GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

KEY

1: Gate for the Emperor
2: Inner Gate
3: Ordinary Gate
4: Palace Buildings
5: Guard House
6: Sentry Post
7: Tea Pavilion
8: Sentry Post
9: Guard House
10: House Temple
11: Barracks
12: Boat House
13: Store Houses

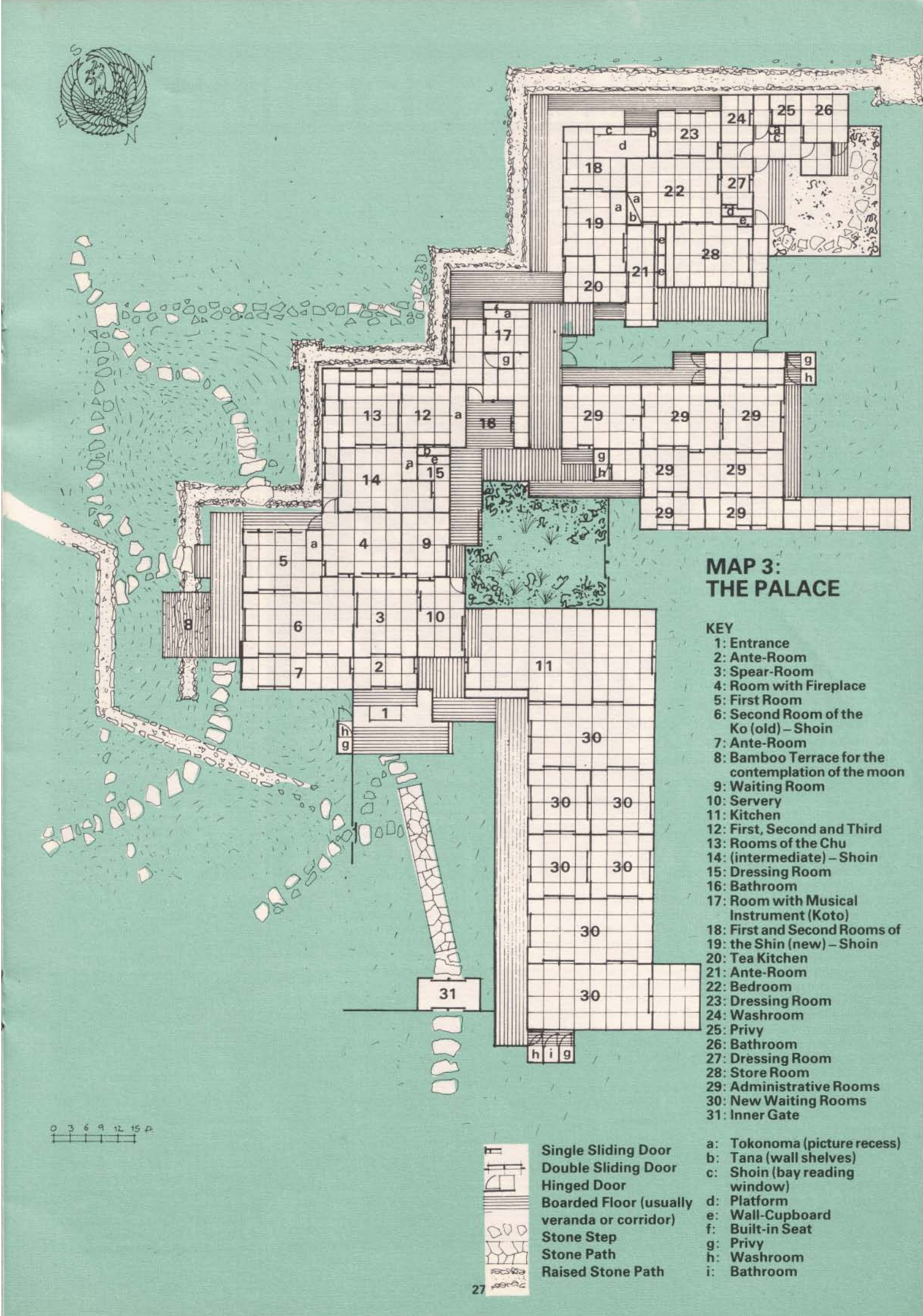
Stone Wall
Bridge
Tree
Building
Water
Routes of Guards

MAP 2: THE TEA PAVILION (Called Shokintei – 7 on Map 1)

KEY

1: First Room
2: Open Tea-Kitchen
3: Second Room
4: Tea-Room
5: Ante-Room
6: Ante-Room
7: Tea-Kitchen
8: Kitchen
9: Inner Court

a: Tokonoma (picture recess)
b: Tana (wall shelves)
c: Wall Cupboard
d: Fire place with Wall Cupboard above
e: Fire place for Tea Ceremony
f: Wall Shelves
g: Stone Water Basin
h: Stone Lantern



MAP 3: THE PALACE

KEY

1: Entrance
2: Ante-Room
3: Spear-Room
4: Room with Fireplace
5: First Room
6: Second Room of the Ko (old) – Shoin
7: Ante-Room
8: Bamboo Terrace for the contemplation of the moon
9: Waiting Room
10: Servery
11: Kitchen
12: First, Second and Third
13: Rooms of the Chu
14: (intermediate) – Shoin
15: Dressing Room
16: Bathroom
17: Room with Musical Instrument (Koto)
18: First and Second Rooms of
19: the Shin (new) – Shoin
20: Tea Kitchen
21: Ante-Room
22: Bedroom
23: Dressing Room
24: Washroom
25: Privy
26: Bathroom
27: Dressing Room
28: Store Room
29: Administrative Rooms
30: New Waiting Rooms
31: Inner Gate

a: Tokonoma (picture recess)
b: Tana (wall shelves)
c: Shoin (bay reading window)
d: Platform
e: Wall-Cupboard
f: Built-in Seat
g: Privy
h: Washroom
i: Bathroom

▷the banks slope steeply and add another 6' to this. The depth of water in the lakes and streams is variable, but always deep enough to cover someone lying flat. Apart from the section near the palace, which consists of lawns and moss gardens, the grounds are rustic with plenty of shrubs and mature trees.

The Tea Pavilion (Map 2). The agent in the advance party is in fact a kunoichi (female ninja) posing as a courtesan called Yuko, who has accompanied Mangara Naotaka, one of Yasusada's personal guards. Although seldom if ever alone, she has managed to make a sketch map of the palace and grounds, which is concealed in the design on the fan she carries. Unable to move alone outside without arousing suspicion, she has persuaded Naotaka, (who is infatuated with her) to take her to the tea pavilion for an informal tea ceremony. Their liaison is already frowned upon, and use of the Imperial pavilion by a commoner is scandalous, so several of Naotaka's samurai are posted at the bridges leading to the pavilion to warn of anyone approaching. Having served tea in the inner tea room (Room 4) Yuko will retire with Naotaka to Room 1, while her maids wait in Room 3. She will play the koto, and sing a song whose refrain is:

The moon in the cold stream like a mirror,
The image left behind a shadow of its glory.

This refers to her fan, which she has left behind in the tea room. You may have to drop hints to ensure the players realise she is without a fan, and put two and two together, but don't make it too easy. To show how the coded map comes out, draw a freehand map, giving a rough indication of the relationship of the various parts of the palace, and the layout of the grounds, but not too much detail. She has also left a message on the fan to say that she will try to find out when and where the meeting with the Emperor is to take place. This means that as well as reconnoitring the palace, they now have to find her room, which is one of those in the new waiting rooms (30). (See map of palace).

The Palace (Map 3). Most of the layout is self explanatory. The Emperor's quarters are in the rooms marked 4, 5, 6 and 12-27. His bodyguard of yamabushi are in the section of rooms marked 29, and Yasusada's party are in the rooms marked 30. Careful reconnaissance will reveal the general layout, although going via roof or underfloor spaces will only give clues if the rooms below or above are occupied. Most samurai and yamabushi will be asleep when the ninja go in, but you can have a few awake, gambling, praying, or shifting on guard duty, to make sure nobody stumbles into a room full of armed men unaware. When Yuko is found, she will tell the players that Yasusada has been granted the unusual honour of being invited by the ex-Emperor to view the moon with him from the platform outside his rooms marked 8. This will take place in two nights time, on the night of the full moon, at the hour of the tiger, an auspicious hour (about 4am). A heavy guard will be posted, but at a discreet distance. Being 'only a simple monk now', the Son of Heaven will serve tea, and then they will view the moon. The conversation until then is only small talk, but, under cover of composing impromptu verses, they will begin to discuss the matter in hand. The key verses, along with their meanings, are given below.

Go-Masakado-in:
On the surface of Hirosawa lake the mist is thick.
What is floating and what is sinking
No man knows.

(There is little mist, the ex-Emperor is probing Yasusada to find his reasons for coming.)

Yasusada:
There is no village where the moon does not shine,
But it is clear in the hearts of enlightened men.

(The Emperor, the moon, is revered by all, but only the pure and enlightened can carry out his will properly).

Go-Masakado-in:
The moon's reflection is deep in the lake,
Yet you can carry it away in a dipper
If your hand is steady.

(I will give you my support if I can be sure that you are trustworthy and have firm support from other daimyo.)

Yasusada:
The pine has no voice,
But in the Western wind it sings.

(I speak on behalf of the Western daimyo.)

Go-Masakado-in:
In the branches of the pine the moon is seen,
But in the lake it shines unbroken.

(I will support your action, but the Emperor himself must not become directly involved.)

A bargain has therefore been struck. Hints, such as the moon Emperor image, should help the players understand the verse.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

We haven't given detailed statistics apart from those in the section on patrols, but they shouldn't be necessary. The object is not to fight the samurai and yamabushi, although some can be wasted on the way out. Their basic function is to provide obstacles for the players to avoid, and to harrass. If the players prepare well, they should avoid direct encounters. The odd guard or servant wandering about will help keep them alert during the mission, but only if they get into a fight should large numbers start turning out. Even then, be sure to leave an escape route, and chase the players out, rather than cornering and destroying them. Use as many guards as you need to do this, and have them act intelligently rather than queueing up to be zapped. (Remember, spears can be used *through* paper walls.)

In *AD&D*, have samurai guards as 1st and 2nd level fighters wearing scale mail and helmet, and armed with spear and bastard sword (katana). There should be fewer yamabushi, but these will be 2nd and 3rd level monks using halberds (naginata). Naotaka and Akihiro should be 6th and 7th level fighters respectively if they need to appear.

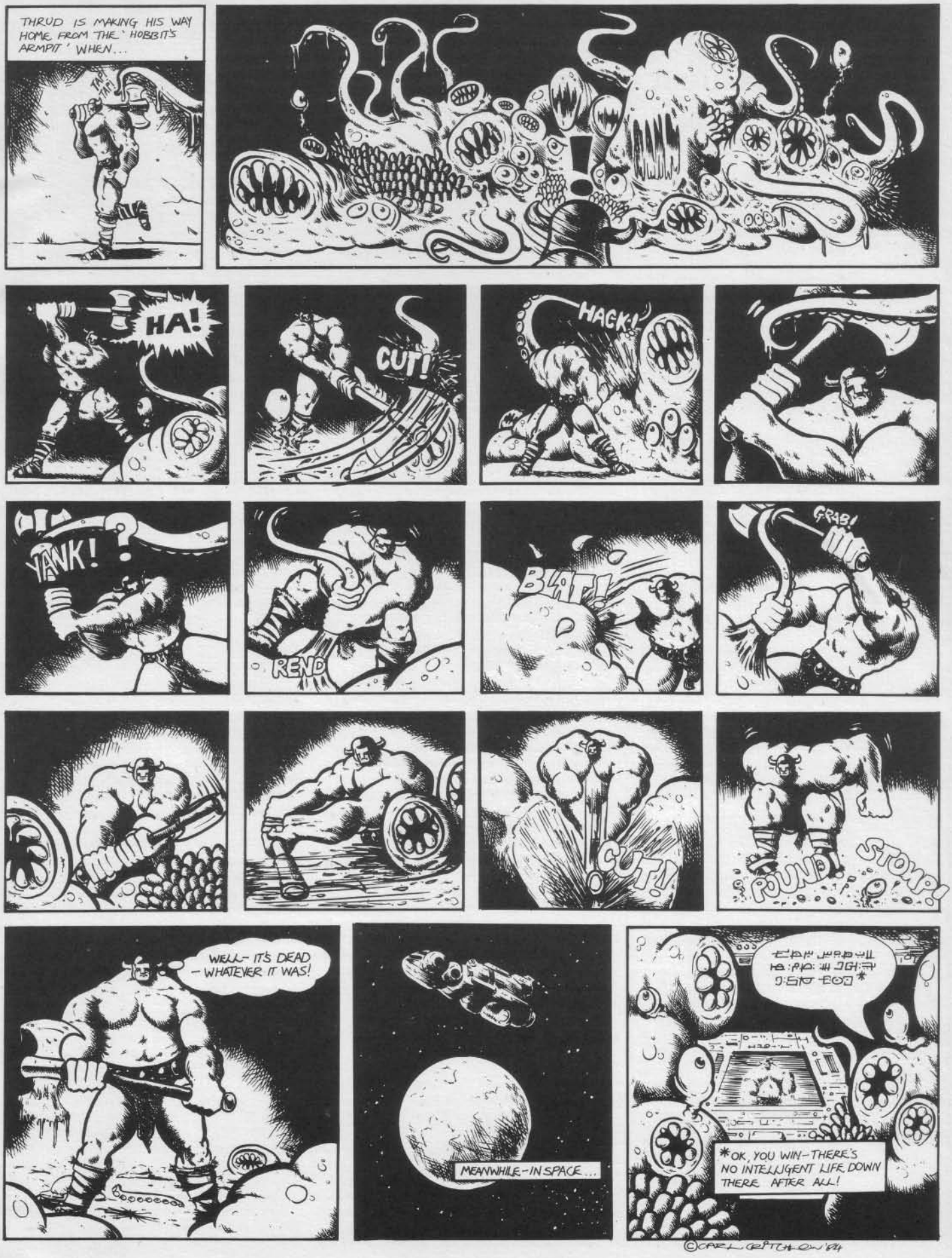
In *RuneQuest*, the guards should have skills of about 40-50% in bastard sword and long spear, heavy scale armour on chest and arms, and open helms. Yamabushi should have 50-60% skills with pole axe (naginata), and Naotaka and Akihiro will have 80-90% skills in bastard sword, and have had time to don full armour. NPCs should not have any battle magic. Servants and other non-combatants are there to panic and get in everybody's way.

In *Bushido*, guards can be first level classic bushi, and have Armour Class 6 armour. Yamabushi will follow the rules on page 8 of Book 2 of the rules. Naotaka and Akihiro should be 5th and 6th level Bushi, with Armour Class 7 armour.

Experience Points

Bushido ninja using this scenario will accumulate Budo according to how well they tackle it. *RuneQuest* players can use the breaks between the parts of the mission to see if they have learned from experience. *AD&D* players will have few combat opportunities, but as DM you should award small amounts of experience points each time a skill is used successfully or a player has a good idea. (Don't be too generous, but award a few points fairly frequently.) Bonus points can be awarded for especially good ideas or role-playing, and for solving the puzzles in the scenario. Players completing each stage of the mission successfully should also receive a bonus.□

THRUD THE BARBARIAN



ON THE ROAD

A RuneQuest Scenario Set in a Trading Caravan
by Anna Price

A perilous journey through the vastness of the Plains of Prax with inter-adventure suggestions for Gloranthan RuneQuest.

INTRODUCTION
Characters in fantasy role-playing games sometimes need to trek long distances. It is possible for the GM to say, 'That took three weeks, you arrive safely", or to roll random encounters. The first option is flavourless, the second tedious, so here is an alternative, in scenario format, to slot in whenever the players set off on some journey.

The referee will need *Cults of Prax* and *Cults of Terror*, but the adventure can take place in any world: I have avoided any place names associated with Glorantha. Cults can easily be changed if Gloranthan religions are not appropriate to your campaign. Stats have been given for *RuneQuest* but it should be an easy matter to convert the scenario to the fantasy role-playing system of your choice.

Most journeying in the ancient world was done by water. The players may find their characters can do likewise. Travel by river would be quite safe and reasonably inexpensive, but a sea-voyage would be costly and potentially dangerous.

Weather and pirates used to be the traveller's major worries, apart from having to raise the money for the fare. Moreover, anyone trying to make a cut-rate journey had to be tough and lucky. Many passengers on such ships woke with aching heads and bound arms to find themselves half-way to the nearest slave-market.

The cheapest and most flexible way to travel was to gather together a large group going in the same direction. This could take a long time, so, in game terms, it will usually be more convenient for the characters to join an already-formed caravan. The next time your players do so, try them with something like the following adventure. This scenario is different to the usual scenarios presented in *White Dwarf* – there is no map provided and referees will have to do some work in setting the adventure in their world.

It helps to have a map of the route, but since the party will not get lost (the caravan leader will have travelled this way many times) and is unlikely to go off in an unexpected direction, the map ned not be extensive.

It would cost characters 5 Lunars (or 5 Silver pieces) per week, or part of a week, to travel with the caravan, no food supplied. Or it would be possible to hire on as a guard or scout, pay 2 Lunars a week, food supplied, 10 Lunars bonus per attack beaten off. Double for mounted scouts. A Healer (only one in each caravan) gets paid 5 Lunars a week.

THE JOURNEY
A caravan can travel up to 30 kilometres a day, in good weather on a decent road. It will usually do less.

The following chronological scenario outline suggests a route around which the adventure unfolds, but can easily be altered to fit your map. Encounters like the river and the mountain pass may be shifted in time, to match your geography. The following should be used as a general guideline of events – players' actions will probably modify the structure slightly.

Day 1
Dvarhelm, the merchant-trader running the caravan, will set out at dawn. People and creatures present are as listed on the Victims Table, except that the Bearwalker, trollkin slaves, 'peasant', and the Flesh Man cultists are not yet there. Dvarhelm's packhorses are led by the Lunars and the Baboons.

A poorly-repaired but adequate road runs north-west from the town or city they start at. The first day's travel is deliberately short and easy. At midday they arrive at a human village, do a little trading, then make camp. A peasant named Clid, not bright but friendly, joins the caravan. He says he is going to become an adventurer.

Some supplies will be bought here (it is cheaper than in town) and from now on the caravan will stock up every time it stops at a settlement.

Day 2
The caravan is still able to follow the old road, but is going through hilly country, travelling north.

At midday it arrives at a troll settlement. Dvarhelm trades as usual, swapping some gaudy cloth for 43 trollkin slaves. They are set to lead the packhorses, which they seem to quite enjoy.

Days 3-4
The caravan leaves the road, moving off north-west, following a faint track into the hills. A hard day's travel brings the caravan through the hills onto the plain beyond, arriving at nightfall in an isolated human village.

Dvarhelm spends next day trading. A couple of travellers leave the caravan, and six human women join it. They do not wear armour, seeming poor and meek. If anyone questions them, they will claim religious necessity prevents them stating the purpose of their journey.

They are eager to talk about their sect, since it is so obscure most people think it does not exist. They are quite boring on the subject. Their god is Flesh Man, who asks only that mortals lead reasonably useful (to their society) lives, promising in return an afterlife like this life, but without the problems. They are all initiates, and initiates are the moral advisors who define for lay members what behaviour is considered useful.

There is one aspect of their cult they do not mention to outsiders. Each initiate must, every season, send a sentient being to join the dead. They do this with their version of the Peaceful Cut, using a garotte [see *Cults of Terror*], in which all initiates have at least 45% skill. The victim must be someone they are acquainted with, and not an enemy slain in battle. They have joined the caravan to fulfill their religious obligations.

Day 5
The group travels east over rolling grasslands. Rejoining the road, they cross the deep river where it is bridged, then leave the road, and go north. That night for the first time, they must make camp.

As they do so, a thick-built man appears as if from nowhere and approaches Dvarhelm, to whom he speaks briefly. Dvarhelm looks dubious, then nods.

Dvarhelm, who has met him before, and indeed owes him a favour, has agreed to let Albrecht the Bearwalker join the caravan. It is a couple of days till the full moon, and Albrecht intends to let his new companions get to know him before announcing his race. He wears no runes, but, if asked, will admit he follows Daka Fal.

Day 6
Roll on the victim table to see who died at the hands of the Flesh Man cultists during the hours of darkness last night. Since this victim was taken totally by surprise and had no chance to resist, reroll if a player character is indicated, or if it is Albrecht.

In future, an attack will be made each night (unless the caravan is in a settlement) and will succeed 90% of the time, except against Albrecht or a PC. The players must roll POWx5 to wake in time, then fight normally, remembering they start on the ground. Albrecht has an 80% chance of driving off his attacker.

If the victim rolled is not present (dead, left etc,) then assume the guards spotted the intruder and chased them off. Otherwise there is a 1%+1%-per-3-guards-posted chance per night that the assassin will be scared off before attacking.

A search for the weapon will only succeed if someone with garotte skill makes a Spot Hidden roll, since the Flesh 'Manites' use their silken sashes, which most people would not recognise as weapons.

Victims who survive will remember only a cord round the neck and a smallish, shadowy figure which fled when attacked.

If asked, Dvarhelm has enough hides to provide everyone with 2 points of neck armour protection: no more can be worn while sleeping. He will charge 10 Lunars per strip of leather, 2 Lunars to anyone in his employ. He will not protect the slaves.

Dvarhelm knows *create market*, which he will cast each night in the wilderness, after the first assassination, excluding a different group every time. However, it will have no effect, as the Flesh Manites regard their victims as friends to whom they are doing a favour.

They travel north-west towards the hills. During the day a player character is approached by Zivgi, a wealthy member of the baboon troupe (although not well known to the others), who has a proposition.

He says that Clid, the would-be adventurer, intends to finance his new career by selling a gem. Clid thinks the stone is worth a few hundred lunars, but Zivgi, a jewller, claims it is worth thousands. He is not carrying much money, but will pay 100 Lunars, if the party will put up any money over the amount that Clid demands.

If the party agree, Clid will bargain hard, starting at 900L, and not going below 350 Lunars. It is worth around 350 Lunars. The jewel is a turquoise carved into the shape of a flowering tree. It has some curiosity value, as it was carved by elves. It is worth around 50 Lunars.

Zivgi and Clid will drop out of the caravan at the next settlement after their scam succeeds. If the party refuse the bait, Zivgi and Clild will con the baboons instead. If they can do so without too much danger, they will steal back the gem just before they leave.

Add them to the Table of Victims when two people are dead.

That evening, Waku (who is illuminated) will start investigating the killings in his own way, by asking a Nysalor riddle each night until he is prevented, or the murderers are found.

Day 7

The caravan is about to enter a narrow pass in the hills. The Centaur-guards have scouted ahead, and say they suspect something, although they have not seen anything definite.

Dvarhelm would like someone less conspicuous than a centaur to see if they can find out what is wrong. (This is a chance for the party to use a variety of skills.)

It is not hard to spot the 1d10+10 broos waiting in ambush but, unless the scouts are actually among the broos, it requires a critical Spot Hidden to see the camouflaged pit across the track.

In fact, there are around 120 broo of fighting age, most relaxing in their nearby cave homes (where they have stored their treasure: mostly in trade goods and equipment to the value of 9,058 Lunars, plus 1d4 magic items).

If the broos are slain, the treasure must be divided amongst all who fight, around 100, with the magic assigned by lot – unless anyone has done something exceptional, in which case the hero or heroes will be voted one of the items each, if there are enough.

Only five of these broo carry disease, so each person must roll 96%+ to catch a disease from wounds or treasure, one roll per wound, plus one for the treasure. Roll 1d6 times on the table of victims for diseased NPCs, minus one per party member who is infected.

Roll 1d20-2 times to see who, if anyone, dies in the battle. The party will, of course, fight normally, being attacked by 1d4-2 new broo each round for 1d6+2 rounds. A minus figure means that one or more of the broo fighting that character will break off. At the end of the 1d6+2 rounds the broo will be practically defeated, and characters in trouble will receive aid in 1d4 rounds.

The broo in the caves will snipe from cover with slings until the attackers can clamber up to them. The caves are not very high: 1d3 damage to anyone who both falls and fails a POWx5 roll. Anyone charging the ambushing broos will fall into the pit: taking no damage, but being put at a disadvantage.

However, Dvarhelm will not be eager to face the broos. He will argue for going around through the hills. If he persuades the party, roll random encounters three times a day for 1d4+ days, as they try to find a way through. From now on, add the extra time take to the day-number.

The rest of this day will be spent either in the hills or traversing the pass.

Days 8-10

Coming out of the hills, the caravan will move south-west, to arrive at evening in a human township. The people will be grateful for news of the broo-ambush, and very grateful if the broo have been wiped out. No garotting will happen that night. The baboons leave the caravan here, intending to go south.

Day 11

The caravan makes poor progress today. It is raining heavily, and they are moving on a dirt track through woodland. Wheels frequently have to be unstuck.

There will be another killing in the night. By this time the party should have some idea who is responsible. Certainly accusations and counter-accusations will have been thrown around: the party will come under suspicion.

From now on the Illuminated One will have a 10% cumulative chance per day of realising the Flesh Manites are responsible. On a 96%+ he accuses someone else: roll on the Victim Table to find out who is wrongly accused, substituting Dvarhelm for Watu and his servants when you roll.

If the Flesh Manites judge anyone is getting suspicious they will creep away in the night.

Days 12-13

It is still raining heavily. The caravan comes to a river, to find that the ford is flooded. A way must be improvised to get men, beasts and waggons across. Dvarhelm will welcome suggestions.

Even after sensible precautions are taken, there is a 25% chance that someone or something will be swept away by the swift-flowing river. The caravan is held up for a day.

Day 14

A soggy caravan treks north-west, skirting a range of mountains to the east. During the day the rain slackens. Roll a random plains encounter.

Day 15

The rain finally stops. Moving north, the scouts find a wounded griffin. If it is aided, it will be grateful, helping by scouting from the air. Its name is Lerao.

A band of mounted nomads can be

seen in the distance, pacing the caravan. (They are watching its progress through their territory, and will try to avoid contact. They think trading is demanding, and distrust the caravan, but will only fight if provoked.)

In camp that night, 'To cheer you all up,' a woman named Ganza will demonstrate a game of skill, played with three small goblets and a pea. It is called Find the Lady. Ganza has Sleight of Hand 75%, and any round when she makes her roll it will take a 20% of normal Spot Hidden to Find the Lady. An ordinary Spot Hidden will be enough if she has failed her roll; a critical then will make it plain she is cheating.

Ganza will accept bets on only one cup per round, offering odds of 4 to 1. She has 500 Lunars, but will not accept bets above 50 Lunars.

Days 16-19

Heading North, the caravan comes to a human township at midday. Dvarhelm will trade. If the Flesh Manites are still around and are unsuspected, they will leave the caravan here. So will the Illuminated One.

The wagons will be overhauled, and animals rested. Dvarhelm will stock up carefully on supplies, especially water.

Day 20

The country through which the caravan is travelling deteriorates into scrubland: Dvarhelm is taking a shortcut, going north-west across semi-desert. This is dangerous country, the Scorpion Men hunt in packs, though, unfortunately, only at night.

There is a Dwarven fortress in which Dvarhelm expects to take shelter that night, for the modest sum of 1 Lunar per living creature.

To his distress, the price has gone up to 15 Lunars each: the Dwarfs have a new party in power. He will go in with his wagons and animals, but employees must pay for themselves. There is only a 20% chance that any NPC group will stay outside.

Any party which does stay out will be attacked in the night by 1d8+2 Scorpion Men.

Day 21

The caravan is moving back into fruitful, settled land, arriving that night at a thriving human town.

The party have now been travelling for three weeks. This may be their destination; or possibly they must leave the caravan here and go on alone; or the caravan may go further in their direction. This depends on the GM's plans and the geography of his world.

Victim Table

d100

01-21: Party (give each a number) plus other adventurers, merchants, etc.
22-24: 3 Centaur guards, Hram, Bramj and Dohm. They are Eirithans.
25-28: 4 general servants. They groom the animals, drive waggons, cook, etc. Lay members of Chalana Arroy.
29-31: Watu the Illuminated and 2 acolytes. They wear runes appropriate to Seven Mothers worshippers, and are lay members of the cult. They do not, of course, announce themselves as Nysalorans.
32-49: 18 Lunars (10 men, 8 women), all of whom, except the woman Ganza, worship the Seven Mothers. She worships Eurmal the Trickster.
50: Albrecht the Bearwalker, Daka Fal lay member.
51-66 12 Baboons, including Zivgi the 'Jeweller'. Six are Sun Dome Templars, and one is a Rune Priest, who will hold service each Fireday. Zivgi and the other five worship Issaries.
67-75: 9 nomads, Waha cultists.
76-00: A party of 27 Daka Fal pilgrims, of mixed races, but mostly human. They are seeking 'a place where magic and death join hands with plenty'.

OTHERS IN CARAVAN

1. Dvarhelm the leader, Issaries Rune Lord.

2. Wharj the Dragonewt, who will be totally indifferent to anything which happens, unless he is slain and his body maltreated.

3. A 'peasant' called Clid, with a valuable gem hidden in his cap.

4. 6 Flesh Man worshippers. Female, human, softspoken, friendly. And deadly.

SUMMARY

There are about 110 humanoid members of this caravan, plus waggons, pack-mules and 43 trollkin slaves. Eight people, plus the trollkin, are not present when the caravan sets out.

Any assassination attempt which is rolled against a person who is not present (gone, dead, etc) is treated as an unsuccessful try. Otherwise 1+(guards/3)% chance to abort the assassination.

Nysalor Riddles

Possible answers are suggested, but other right answers are certainly possible. Players should write down the answers, not call them out. Add more riddles if you need them.

1. Where is the best place to store scrolls of wisdom? Answer: In the mind; or, anywhere but in Lankhor Mhy's temples. (Read Native Tongue).

2. What is taller than a giant? Answer: A taller giant, a dragon and a mountain. (Climbing).

3. Where does your breath go when you die? Answer: Where it always went, into the wind. (Hide item.)

4. You draw your sword. I draw my sword. You fight with me. Are we friends or enemies? Answer: For my part, I am your friend (or enemy); or , it depends on what you mean by 'fight with'. (Shield parry).

5. What flies faster than any bird, yet has no wings? Answer: the sun and the wind and a lover's heart to his beloved. (Tracking.)

6. If I breathe I die. Where am I? Answer: Underwater; or, in a cloud of poison. (Swimming.)

7. Are dreams true? Answer: Only to a sleeper; or, if the dreamer makes them so. (Map making.)

8. When is a man not a man? Answer: When he is a woman; or, when he is a corpse. (Speak Native Tongue.)

CONCLUSION

There are no statistics, because monsters should be adjusted to match your player characters, and stats for caravan members will probably not be needed. Any stats you need can be taken from *Foes*, prepared beforehand, or just taken from the average stats given in the rules.

Having seen this outline, you should find it easy to prepare other caravan trips, if they become necessary. Here are some basic ideas for more caravans which you may find helpful: Escorting food to the heart of a famine area. Attacks by the starving.

Unknown to everyone, the caravan leader is a slaver, who is looking especially for unusual slaves.

Someone on the caravan is carrying an item sacred to the nomads through whose territory they are travelling.

A route must be established across a newly-appeared area of chaos.□

TOON

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Designed by
Greg Costikyan

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Dear *WD*,

Aaaaarrgh! This is a heart-felt plea from all those grey-haired gamers who have been playing for many years and who are becoming exasperated by your magazine. Take as an example, issue *57*. The article on psionics was interesting and useful, as were the *Open Box* and *Night's Dark Agents*. The comic strips were, as usual, fairly to very amusing; the two scenarios were excellent, but *Critical Mass, RuneRites, Lew's Views, Starbase, Fiend Factory* and *Treasure Chest* were typical – totally insipid and tedious.

For these columns to be of any use, a different approach is required by their respective editors. For example, rather than produce endless lists of new monsters in *Fiend Factory*, how about each issue being a treatise on the life-cycle of well established monsters (remember the Uruk-Hai battle manual?). Similarly, what happened to Bob McWilliams' thought-provoking bibliographies?

Also, please inform Messrs Clarke and Langford that If I want to read reviews of books and computer software I will buy magazines dealing with such things. The article on the *Belgariad* in issue *56* indicated what *Critical Mass* should do: show how to adopt ideas from books to game campaigns. Likewise, I may have been involved with in the creation of *Microview* in a small way, but it is currently a waste of space. Reviews, if they have to be there, should be of commerically produced GAPs, and the department should concentrate on printing useful GAPs written in a standard, widely known dialect of BASIC (eg *Sinclair* BASIC).

Yours in impassioned anguish,
Nick Middleton, Cameley, Avon.

The role of Microview *is certainly under scrutiny at present; with games being extensively covered in computer magazines any reviews would be duplications of countless others. The trend towards useful GAPs will continue, whenever possible.* Critical Mass *is, however, the only real source of information on SF/Fantasy books which is widely available to hobbyists and although you could join the* BSFA *to get the necessary information I wonder if* WD *readers would thhink the extra expense warranted it? –Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

I cannot understand why a role-playing games monthly has wasted so much space to a simpleton's adventure. I am referring to the *Castle of Lost Souls*. This coincided with the *Dwarf's* general release in newsagents and I hope that this style of adventure does not indicate the future level of your magazine.

I will stop '*Dwarf* bashing' now and return to the increase in the amount of *Traveller* and the decline in what was an overall superiority of *RuneQuest* articles. The superb adventure *Sky-Rig* was the best for a long time; although the basic idea of a lost sky-rig sounded familiar, the scenario proved to be refreshingly original. This is a must as an adventure in a campaign. The only question I have to ask is why don't you set most of your scenarios and *Traveller* linked articles in the Imperium? At one time you used to and I am sure that most people use the Imperium as their campaign background.

Also I feel I must agree with the general view that the *Dwarf* is becoming a 'magic and monster' factory. Although I don't really object, I do find that a lot of the monsters are unuseable because they lack sufficient background, and as for the magic spells and items it is rare that I find an item that is good enough to be used in my campaign. Maybe it would be better if the *Fiend Factory* and *Treasure Chest* were combined and broadened their horizons a little.

Yours,
Stephan Sanders, Reading.

I am a little surprised that you think the Traveller *articles are not linked with the Imperium – Bob McWilliams ensures that* Starbase *articles tie in with the Imperium, and although not every adventure has Imperial involvement, surely it isn't always necessary to produce an enjoyable* Traveller *adventure? –Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

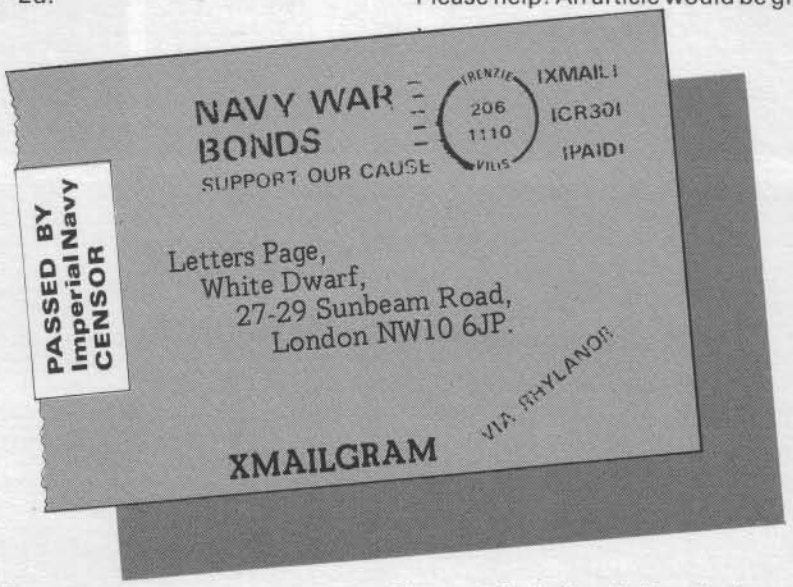
Eric of Bonémaloné? Melancholy crimson-eyed wimp? By Arioch! What do you think you're playing at? Is this the true fate of the champion eternal, to share the same cartoon strip with a clumsy, musclebound wally?

Seriously though, I have to congratulate Carl Critchlow on an excellent cartoon, which had me laughing from the first frame to the last – well done!

And so, until the next conjunction of the million spheres I bid you farewell.

James Broughton, Lincoln.

It seems we can't leave Elric alone – hope you enjoy 'his' exploits this issue as well! –Ed.



Dear *WD*,

I don't often become moved to put pen to paper, but I feel I must respond to the letter from Altea the Enviable in *WD57*.

I've been reading *WD* since issue 1 and have always found it very interesting. This may be because I have an 'aberrant mind' and like to play *RuneQuest* (I used to play *D&D* and *AD&D* but I got better).

Now if 'Altea', who must be so far into gaming he can't remember his real name, bothered to read through the classified ads section, he (or she) would notice [*WD57* being a fine example] that there are a vast number of 'aberrant minds' out there clamouring for *RQ* articles, scenarios, products, etc, so it seems to me that *RQ* is just shifting the balance a little to the more needed areas of FRP. Let's face it, to go through all the available material for the *D&D* family you'd spend enough time to have got yourself an Open University Degree.

As to complaining about articles aimed at the new (via newsagents) readership, that shows an extreme reluctance to allow our hobby to spread. The articles were informative and interesting and I, despite having been gaming for years, managed to appreciate them – I can only wonder did 'Altea' even bother to read them.

Yours,
Jon Crane, Tidworth.

Dear *WD*,

We are crying out for some guidelines for applying alignments in *AD&D* to inter-party wrangling. The alignments as described in the *DMG* and *PH* are (or seem to us to be – but maybe we're just thick) very orientated to a view of the world as a whole and we are finding it very difficult to apply them to a satisfactory degree, particularly with respect to characters with some degree of neutrality.

Where does the rest of the party stand in relation to the instigator(s) of the row, whether it is over an item of the spoils, a course of action or the general attitude of a member of the party? We realise that this is a pretty vague way of putting it, but to give some detailed examples of the many and varied devious, backhand stunts that some people have been pulling would take not a short while.

Please help! An article would be great if anyone feels like sticking their neck out. There have been some extremely heated discussions, both in and out of character, with the DMs, who want to keep control but are finding it mind-bendingly difficult.

Well, there it is. Hope you can see what we're driving at and I don't suppose we're the only ones in this mess. Article? Go on... why not?

Love from,
Kate, Dunc and Phil, Manchester.

Fig 1

Fig 2

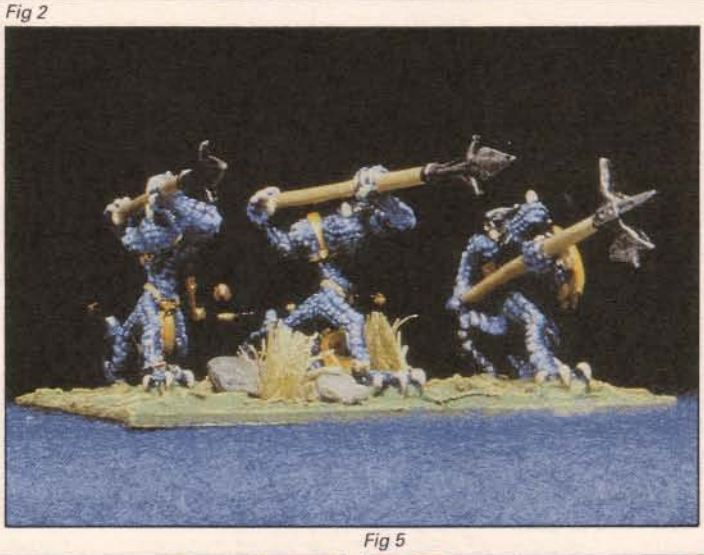


Fig 3

Fig 4

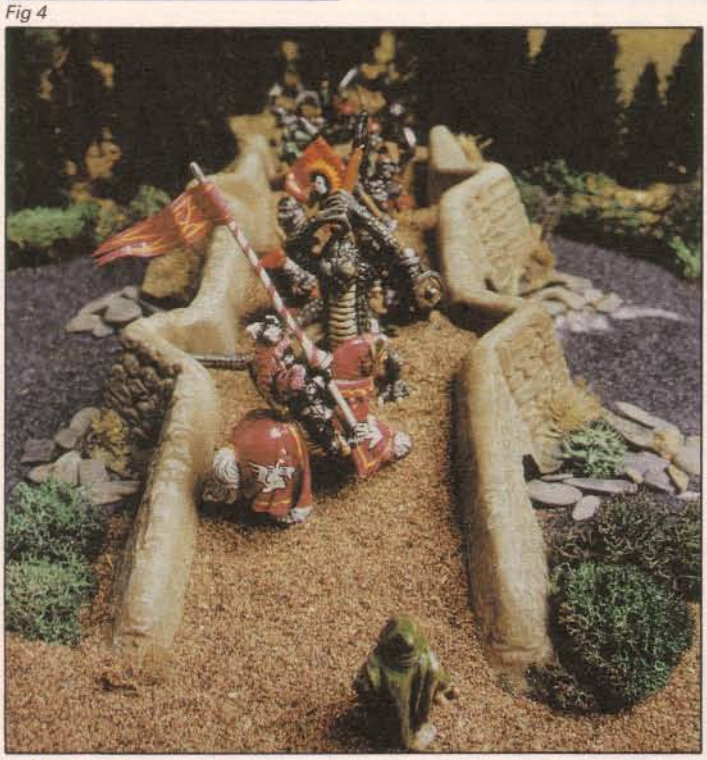


Fig 5

Fig 6

Photographs by Andy Whale, Gary Chalk and Joe Dever.

Tabletop Heroes *is a regular column of figure reviews and painting tips, written by Gary Chalk and Joe Dever.*

A BRUSH WITH THE LORE

Avoiding Some Hair-Raising Problems

This month we're turning the spotlight on two important basics: paints and brushes. The brush is the single most important aspect of good painting and it is a false economy to purchase cheap brushes instead of a relatively expensive but good quality sable brush; treated with care a sable brush will outlast and outpaint several cheaper nylon or squirrel-hair brushes. Model shops rarely stock a wide selection of quality brushes, therefore we recommend a visit to your local art shop. A Size 1 sable brush is a most worthwhile investment, for it will perform a wide range of tasks. Once you have invested in a sable brush, look after it; store it in an upright position and clean it thoroughly between colours and after use. Remember three simple rules:

1. *Never* dip your brush all the way into a paint.
2. *Never* leave your brushes in the thinners bottle.
3. *Do not* use the same brush for enamel and acrylic paint.

When your brush eventually loses its point, it can still be put to good use for rougher painting tasks such as large figure bases and dry-brushing.

The most common paints used to finish miniatures are enamels and acrylics. Paints are classified according to the medium which binds together the pigment. The chart below lists these different types of paint and their individual characteristics:

Figs 1 and *4* show some of the new *Lone Wolf* miniatures available from *Citadel*. We would like to declare our obvious interest in this range but feel that Mike and Alan Perry have accurately sculpted our literary creations making them worthy of inclusion. Full *Warhammer* statistics are included in the first boxed set entitled *Giak Attack*. The bridge featured in *Fig 4* is from the *Bellona* range of wargame accessories, a cheap and highly recommended source of basic tabletop features. A similar range of 25mm buildings and accessories are also available from *Gallia Reproductions*, but ones cast in resin as opposed to vacuum-formed plastic.

Fig 2 shows a threesome of *Citadel's* lizardmen, sculpted by Tom Meier. Odd shields and weapons have subsequently been added to the original castings adding even more variety to the individual figures.

Fig 3 depicts Sir John Tyreweld, painted by Tim Hall. This animated leader is taken from the *Citadel Regiments of Renown* set called *The Knights of Origo*, a ten-figure boxed set that retails at £3.50. The knights themselves are all identical castings that closely resemble Teutonic knights of the 13th Century, each sporting the distinctive square barrel-helm or 'Topfhelm' of that fighting order.

A close-up of the facial detail of Golgoth, Lord of Balrogs [*Citadel TA1*], is depicted in *Fig 5*. In view of the £8.50 price tag and the amount of work needed to construct it, we recommend this figure to advanced modellers only. Full instructions for assembling large or particularly difficult figures can be found in the new *Citadel Compendium* [£1.25] which additionally features an excellent painting guide by Keith Adams.

With the popularity of wilderness adventures and mass-battle fantasy wargaming a need has arisen for practical terrain upon which such relatively large scale adventures can take place. If you do not enjoy the luxury of a permanent games table, or feel that your tabletop settings let down your carefully painted miniatures, take a look at *Fig 6*. These excellent modules are just some of those available in the *Integral Terrain* range from *Games Innovation*. Each 2ft sq scenic module is manufactured from a dense expanded polystyrene formulated for its strength; its lightweight construction facilities ease of transportation and storage. A large range of modules are currently available and several new fantasy additions are soon to be entered into the catalogue.

Useful Addresses

Games Innovation, 23 Sladesbrook, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1SH.
Gallia Reproductions, 21/23 Boston Rd, Holbeach, Spalding, Lincs PE12 7LR.□

PAINTS GUIDE

Type of Paint	*Characteristics*	*Advantages*	*Disadvantages*
WATER-BASED PAINT			
Watercolours	Available in tubes or solid blocks. Matt finish. Thinner and Solvent: Water.	Good for flags. Best used on an absorbent surface ie paper/card.	Watercolour blocks give a very weak wash only.
Poster colour	Comes in a paste, powder or block. Matt finish. Thinner and Solvent: Water.	Very opaque finish when applied to white u/coat. Good for flags.	Tends to 'bleed' and pick up the colour of any previous coats.
Gouache	Finer pigment than normal water colours. Avail- in tubes. Thinner and Solvent: Water, or PVA medium (eg. Nacryl).	Wide range. Blend well and can give interesting effects but recommended to advanced/adventurous painters only.	Picks up colour from previous coats. Less durable than enamel or acrylics.
Ink	Available as liquid. Transparent. Matt finish. Thinner and Solvent: Water.	Ideal for use as a tint over painted surfaces.	Too pale to be used dir- on undercoated figures. Poor durability. A varnish is essential.
Acrylic	Available in jars and tubes. Gloss to Matt finish. Thinner: Water Solvent: Ethyl Alcohol dries quickly.	Compatible with all water-based paints. Very rich colours and wide range available. Kind to brushes.	Tends to flow less readily than enamels, and shrinks as it dries unless mixed with an acrylic tension breaker.
Emulsion	Available in liquid or gel. Opaque colour, matt finish. Thinner: Water Solvent: Ethyl Alcohol.	Cheap. Ideal for large areas eg buildings and terrain. Readily available.	Clogs brushes very quickly. Not recommended for fine work.
OIL-BASED PAINT			
Oil	Available in tubes. Semi-gloss finish. Thinner; Linseed oil, turps, or oil copal medium. Solvent: Paint-stripper (Take care to use a suitable stripper when painting plastics).	Gives good results on horses on other large creatures. Widely available.	Can literally take weeks to dry. Rather rough pig- for small figure work.
Enamel	Available in tins, jars and aerosols. Gloss, matt and semi-gloss finishes. Thinner: Turps/White Spirit. Solvent: Paint-stripper (See 'Oil Solvent').	Widely available. More realistic than other paints, especially on dull clothing, leather and figure bases. Reasonably priced. Excellent flow characteristics generally ensures a one-coat opaque finish.	Not as bright as many other types of paint. Colours dull when mixed together. Medium and pigment tend to separate in container – always shake well before use.
Alkyd	Retains some of the better qualities of oil paints. Thinner: Turps Solvent: White Spirit.	Touch dry in 24 hrs. Very rich colours. Compatible with oil and enamel paints. Inexpensive. Ideal for flesh tones.	Takes up to a week to fully settle before varnish can be applied. Limited availability.
CELLULOSE-BASED PAINTS			
Cellulose	Available in tins and aerosol cans. Gloss and matt finish. Thinner: Cellulose thinner. Solvent: Acetone or amylacetate.	Quick drying. Good for gloss finish on large metal/wood metals.	Attacks some plastics. Does not blend well therefore limited use with with small figures.
PVC	Available as liquid in jars and cans. Gloss finish. Thinner: Cellulose thinner Solvent: As above.	Flexible – does not crack easily. Ideal for scenary that receives constant handling.	Does not blend well. Limited use with small figures.

Starbase *is an alternate monthly column for* Traveller *enthusiasts, edited by Bob McWilliams.*

CORE

Consulary Office of Reconnaissance and Exploration

The following item tackles the perennial problem of providing players with suitably high-powered antagonists. I should not advise the use of the career procedure for player characters as it produces over-skilled persons compared to normal Traveller *procedures. Please also note that although Rudolf has used the Zhodane – Imperial setting, this expansion is in no way 'official' –B McW.*

Despite its (intendedly misleading) name, this organisation of the Zhodani Consulate is no regular scout service. In fact, it is a highly secret intelligence agency specialised in covert survey and secret operations on non-tech and low-tech planets (TL 0-3) within both the Zhodani Consulate and the Imperium.

Most CORE-missions are designed in order to establish a Zhodani-friendly and Zhodani-influenced (controlled) government, enabling the Zhodani to use the planet as a naval base, or to gain access to the planets natural resources.

Apart from these routine missions, CORE is also responsible for covert survey on newly discovered non-tech planets where a decision pro or contra interdiction has to be made, and for the control of all existing interdictions.

ORGANISATION

CORE Headquarters on Zhodane consists of the Executive Committee with Planning Board/Braintrust, the Scientific Department (evaluation of data, development and improvement of equipment) with a small Medical Branch and the Administration and the Field Operations Staff, which co-ordinates and controls all activities of the various detachments. Each District or Frontier District has a number of CORE-Detachments equal to the number of low/non-tech planets within or just beyond its boundaries. Size and equipment of these detachments vary widely, as they are tailored to the specific situation on the planet in question. One common feature is the *Bal-Team*, a field unit consisting of one scientist/psionic (referred to as *Brain*), one combat specialist (*Arm*) and one support specialist (*Line*).

CAREER

To enlist with CORE, a Zhodani has to have 9+ Intelligence and Education. Former members of army, navy or scout service are preferred.

Basic Training

Consists of 4 years at CORE Academy on Zhodane. The trainee may choose one of the three careers:

Scientist/Psionic (Brain). Only possible if the trainee is a telepath/clairvoyant. Apart from psionic training, the subject of Xeno-Ethnology is also studied, and gives the future specialist Liaison-1, Interrogation-1 and Streetwise-1.

Combat Specialist (Arm). The trainee attends weapon training and learns some related skills: one vehicle skill; Recon-1, or Survival-1; Demolition-1 or Combat Engineering-1; and either Sword-1 + Bow-1 or Blade-1 + Pistol-1.

Support Specialist (Line). A well-trained technical expert, skills being Communication-1; Computer-1; *either* Mechanical-1 or Electronics-1, one vehicle skill and Forgery-1. Lines are able to handle almost any equipment of TL14 and anything below. After Basic Training the recruit is promoted to Specialist 1 and starts his or her first 4-years' term in active service. Each term is divided into 1 year active duty (Field Assignment), 1 year Internal Duty, a second Field Assignment of 1 year, and finally 1 year of Advanced Training.

During Field Assignments no skills may be learned. During Internal Duty, the specialist learns the following skills on a roll of 9+ *each*: Medical, Administration, Computer.

Advanced Training

Each fourth year this may be attended on any school of any Zhodani service. The specialist is free to choose any school and to learn whatever he thinks necessary for his job, but common favourites are Commando School for 'Arms', Intelligence School for 'Brains' and Specialist Schools for 'Lines'. Each CORE-agent surviving a 4-year term without spoiling a major operation is automatically re-enlisted and promoted to the next higher rank (CORE-Spec 2, CORE-Spec 3 and so on).

CORE TACTICS

If the situation on the planet in question does not request otherwise, the routine procedure for a mission is the following:

1. The BAL-Team (only very rarely more than one team) is smuggled onto planet by a scoutship and uses the first week(s) to establish a secret and well-hidden base, where the equipment, supplies and one vehicle are stored.

2. The support specialist uses his outfit (recon drones etc, often disguised as animals) to obtain as much information as possible.

3. When enough information has been gathered the support specialist stays at the hidden base to give back-up if needed, and the two others disguise as natives and carry out the planned operation. They stay in permanent contact with base, at least once daily, by radio. Under normal circumstances (not always within Imperial space), a scoutship or a patrol vessel of the navy keeps near the planet to provide additional support, if required.

CORE-agents rely heavily on their technically supeior outfit and their skills to solve a given problem. Direct use of force and modern weapons is considered 'unsound', having little to do with good intelligence work.

In any case, the BAL-Team is always commanded by the scientist/psionic ('Brain'), and also all supporting units.

SCENARIO SUGGESTIONS

CORE-specialists may be encountered on literally any low-tech or non-tech planet along the Zhodani-Imperial borders – Spinward Marches, Out Rim Void, Vanguard Reaches and Beyond. There are innumerable ways how players could come into contact with them. Here are a few:

1. The players were sent by a patron, probably a corporation, but perhaps an Imperial military or intelligence organisation, to establish peaceful contact with a local government. Unbeknownst to the players, a CORE-team is trying the same, and will do its best to get rid of the players.

2. Something (eg a crashed courier-ship) or someone on the planet has vital information. Both sides, the players and the CORE-team, are racing to get the information first. Unfortunately, the natives know of this, so all activities have to be under cover.

3. In addition to the plot(s) above, the society forming the background of the struggle is strange and unpredictable. Activities are hindered by the natives' religious beliefs and traditions ("Never step on Akr'll'geshkts on the day of the sinking moon!"), and the players have to use all their cunning.

Many referees have problems in designing low-tech cultures. Help may be found in fantasy RPGs, for much of their material can easily be adapted. I used the town *Irilian* [*WD42-47*) as a capital of a low-tech world, and had the players trying to overthrow the Zhodani-controlled council by causing an insurrection of the mob. It worked quite well, although some problems had to be solved in advance:

1. Magic and strange monsters are difficult to fit into *Traveller*. You may throw them out, or replace them (eg turn magic into psionics – but be careful – and monsters into dangerous animals).

2. Fantasy adventures often have a very straightforward plot: the good ones trying to erase the bad ones and vice versa. Just drop the 'philosophical' side of the conflict (Law versus Evil) and change both sides into more human political factions, including much treachery and double-crossing.

3. Most *Traveller* skills, except perhaps sword and bow, do not fit too well into a low-tech setting. Therefore, lay emphasis on good role-playing instead of dicing out the successful use of skills! Make the players use some brainsweat on 'political' moves like destroying an enemy's reputation through nasty rumours and the like. And never forget that the CORE-guys are experienced in just this kind of psychological warfare.

4. Take care that no-one runs berserk with a plasmagun! Such weapons can easily destroy an entire low-tech town within seconds.□

THE TROVELLERS

CHAPTER 8: "SHUTTLE SKUTTLE":

While **Dinalt** and the **Patron** wait outside sensor range in the **Osprey**, the others force the crew of the shuttle to penetrate **Pscias** defences. Their objective: **The Prison complex**...

The shuttle encounters the desert planet's **orbiting defences**...

RuneRites *is a regular column for readers' ideas for* RuneQuest, *edited by Dave Morris.*

BLOOD SPORTS

GLADIATORS IN RUNEQUEST
by Matthew Pook

It is quite possible for cities to have amphitheatres in which to stage sports contests, public executions, and gladiatorial games; the last might take place every 2-3 weeks, and have an entrance fee of about 5 clacks. At great festivals they might last several days.

How to Become a Gladiator
Two types of gladiatorial school exist, the first privately owned by a rich noble or other individual who can afford it, the second run by the local ruling hierarchy. One may enter a school between the ages of 10 and 13, in which case STR, CON, and DEX will be 2d6+6 (or an equivalent improved level for non-humans), or between the ages of 14 and 45, in which case normal training will be received but there is no bonus to characteristics. Any race or sex may join; one may sign a contract with a private owner for a year, which the signatory cannot break but the owner can at any time, and renew for further years if desired, or sell oneself to the school as a slave. This may also be done for the publicly owned school, but only a really desperate person would do it, for membership of a publicly owned school is normally for life; most such gladiators will be criminals or bought slaves, who are often war captives, and private gladiators may also be acquired in this way. Earnings as a gladiator should not be too high (as a rough guide, 1d100 x 2d4 lunars a year, and see below), but a popular gladiator may earn more, and could eventually earn enough to buy freedom if the owner(s) consent; this will be symbolised by the gift of a wooden sword, which might also be presented to an outstandingly successful and popular gladiator, to gain favour with the crowd. Each gladiator receives a tablet recording his/her name, that of the owner of the school, and the date of issue. This must not be lost, on pain of death.

Training
The gladiator will receive 25% training (+ attack and parry bonuses if positive) in the fighting style for which he/she has been selected; roll d100 and check the table below (STR and DEX must affect the choice, as also of broad or bastard sword). Other *RQ* weapons may be used, but not normally missile weapons. Skill already gained with another weapon will be regarded as a speciality, and the weapon master will give little or no training in this, but rather in a new weapon. Those with unarmed combat skills might be pitted against one another, or against an armed opponent. Unless otherwise stated, the only protection worn is a leather loincloth (1 or 2 points on abdomen).

Gladiator Style Table

01-09	Open helm, plate/heavy scale cuirass, large shield, javelin, and short sword.
10-18	(Usually pitted against next) curved dagger-like scythe (cf Lunar sickle) and small round buckler which can be used like a heavy cestus.
19-27	Full helm, medium shield, 1H sword, 1 or 2-point leather wrapped around sword-arm.
28-36	Netman (usually pitted against next) with net in right hand, trident in left; will try to entangle opponent and kill with trident [see *Cults of Terror* or *Borderlands* for net-fighting].
37-45	Full helm, large shield, 1H sword.
46-54	Any combination of visorless full helm (ie blindfold) and 2 weapons; two such will always be pitted against one another.
55-63	Short sword in either hand.
64-72	Full helm, plate cuirass, vambraces, and greaves, chainmail skirt, with any combination of 2 weapons or 1 weapon and shield.
73-81	Lassooman; will try to lassoo opponent and finish off with dagger [see *Different Worlds 22* on use of lassoo].
82-90	Gang: one of several trained to fight together, roll again to see what you are trained as.
91-99	Beast-fighter; will fight wild animals, roll again to see what you are trained as.
00	Trained in all types; can only begin at age 10-13, roll again if not.

In a single-day games, only about 1d4+1/+2 fights will take place, and a gladiator will fight only once or twice; during a festival of several days, a rich school might provide 1d6+2 fights of various types, and a gladiator will take part in 1d3-1 fights, per day, but poorer schools will provide less. As the gladiator's popularity increases, he/she will fight less often proportionately. If in bad health/condition, a gladiator will not fight at all. After each games normal experience rolls will be taken, and training continues. Pay is normally 1L per week or per kill; after every 10 kills made, a gladiator is eligible for a gold sword (worth 5 wheels), and at any time, once established, may be given a wooden sword and freed from service. He/she may then re-engage if so desired.

Battle magic may be used, but by agreement between the combatants' owners; private owners must abide by terms set by the publicly owned schools if providing opponents for them. If the terms agreed are broken by one gladiator, his/her opponent wins the fight; if both break the terms, the fight is void.

PIT FIGHTING
by James Waterfield

Pit-fighting is a popular sport among barbarian races of all sorts, to judge from the tales of travellers who have witnessed and adventurers who have survived it. The essential feature is the pit, 3m square and 3 deep, with many wooden spikes set into its walls. Fighters are let loose in the pit naked, apart from any weapons or shields they may be given; a Fumble will mean a fall onto one of the spikes and a successful Knockback will force an opponent onto one, which will do the damage of a 1H short spear to a random hit location and could well impale. 'Staffers' armed with quarterstaffs will stand at the sides of a pit to strike any fighter who tries to climb out; they usually have about 60% ability. The mode of combat varies according to racial traditions; humans may put a fighter in unarmed (optionally, GM's might allow pit-fighters to have unarmed combat skills [cf *WD30* and *41*], but trainers in these would be rare indeed in most areas); trolls might offer bludgeons to use; broos might require a head-butting contest.

A circumstantial account of Morokanth practice (which cannot be confirmed at present) reports that they select likely herd-men, give them INT through the Rune Spell *alter creature*, and train them to use metal claws which mimic the Morokanths' own, doing 1d6 damage (+ any bonus), to 50% ability, with small shield at 40%. The various clans will compete, using captured humanoids as well as herd-men. Champion pit-fighters may arise (usually Ogres and Agimori) and any fighter who has been champion for a season will be freed (a good background for a PC). Agimori who are freed and return to their tribe are treated as heroes for having proved the superiority of the Agimori, and always gain status as minor chiefs or leaders of small clans. Morokanth like to pit adventurers who enter their lands against herd-men, allowing them only small hand-weapons like daggers and short swords, and small shields. Any adventurer who wins a fight against a trained pit-fighter will be freed, and may even receive as a prize a set of metal claws. Trolls might well train trollkin to fight in similar contests.□

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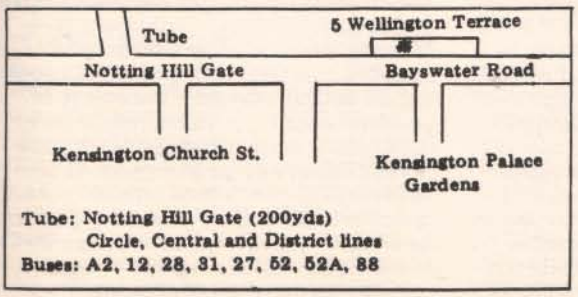

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Fiend Factory *is a regular department for readers'* D&D *monsters. This issue, the Great Hunt.*

THE GREAT HUNT

by Simon Iff

INTRODUCTION

Remember the *Wild Hunt Competition* in *WD53*? Well, we've finally sorted out a winner from the many entries, and here it is, the *Great Hunt* by Simon Iff. The two runners up who won signed copies of Ian Livingstone's *Deathtrap Dungeon* and *Island of the Lizard King*, were David Fincham of Norfolk and J Clark McAbee of Washington, USA.

BACKGROUND

On learning that the Lord Demogorgon had created the 'Death Knights', the Lord Orcus flew into a mighty and prodigous rage, reviling the Prince of Princes for trespass into his own province of sovereignty over the undead. In his fury the Lord Orcus resolved to create a power so formidable, and so mighty withall, that it would thunder through the spheres, hunting down and destroying the Death Knights, wherever they could be found. In passing the Lord Orcus had also created a formidable agency of his own will.

Pamlar Sn'Grasse
'The White Book of Maripoisa'

In his search for the ultimate huntsman, Orcus worked an act of unparalleled necromancy – forging physical form out of the very fabric of the *Negative Material Plane*. Six such forms were created in total, and the spirits of Orcus' six most powerful human clerics compelled to inhabit them. The result was the Reavers.

THE REAVER

No Appearing:	1-6 [See below]
Armour Class:	-1/4 [See below]
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	90 points
Attack:	By weapon
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil
Intelligence:	Exceptional
Size:	M
Magic Resistance:	80%/Standard [See below]

GENERAL

The reavers, as these creatures were named by men, normally roam the *Prime Material Plane* in search of their implacable foes, the Death Knights [see *Fiend Folio*]. They may also be encountered throughout the *Inner Planes* and even in the *Plane of the Abyss*. They usually hunt in pairs, but may try to summon their kin if the need is great. Under exceptional circumstances the reavers may hunt together as *The Great Hunt*, under the sway of Sklavak, Captain General of the Great Hunt and High Reaver. A form of telepathic empathy operates between the reavers, each being aware of the needs of the others over immeasurable distances, hence their ability to 'call' to each other, even across the Planes. When enclosed by the same *Field* [see below], they are able to telepathically communicate precise information freely and instantaneously.

Unlike true demons, reavers are able to move from their home plane, (the *Negative Material*), into any other *Inner Plane* once a day without aid. They must then remain in that plane for at least one full day before they are able to return home. They are unable to travel directly from one foreign plane to another, or from a location in a foreign plane to another, or from a location in a foreign plane to another location on the same plane. They can only visit the Abyss if summoned there. They can be summoned or dismissed in the normal ways by any brave enough to try. They are not affected by holy water or holy symbols. They can be compelled to service only through the same powerful magic as will bind a type IV demon. Reavers will never bargain service for tribute or sacrifice, nor will they ever be placated by offer of the same. A Reaver will only serve a magic-user if placed under the compulsion of a powerful threat, but will thereafter harbour undying hatred towards the individual concerned.

THE REAVER 'FIELD'

Reavers have the ability to 'tear free' a small portion of the *Negative Material Plane* and cloak themselves in it. They will normally be encountered surrounded by such a field. It is 3" in diameter, completely enveloping the reaver, and moving with it.

From outside of a reaver's field an observer can see only an opaque mist of indefinite quality and colour – a hole that is no hole, obscuring that which waits within. Reavers are able to maintain such fields communally, and will always seek to do so in combat. Thus two reavers in close proximity can support a 4" field, three reavers, a 5" field and so on.

A reaver suffering from more than 50 points of damage is weakened and is unable to support a field, which will collapse doing 1d10 points of damage to all inside *excluding* the reaver. Losing its field will not effect the reaver's ability to *gate*, but will mean that it must remain in its home plane for 1 month before any further travel is possible. Neither will it interfere with the Reaver's empathic ability and, if its field is down, it will normally either *gate* itself out or call to its kin. If sufficient damage is inflicted on a reaver who is supporting a field in conjunction with other reavers, the field will simply shrink 1" in size – doing damage only in that area through which it has contracted.

Only the physical form of a reaver can be destroyed outside of the *Negative Material Plane*. If this should happen the reaver's spirit will return to its home, where it must remain for one year. It will lose all its previous *marks* in this period [see below]. While 'in-field' a reaver's Armour Class is -1 and its Magic Resistance is 90%. 'Out-of-field' its Armour Class is 4 and Magic Resistance standard. (As 13th level Cleric.)

A reaver has no spell casting ability. It can, however, infallibly recognise its quarry once the quarry has entered the field. It is also able to immediately sense the presence of any creature, even an invisible one, that enters in. Thus it is impossible to 'sneak up on' or 'surprise' a reaver. The reaver can mentally *mark* all intelligent individuals that enter, and can *always* recognise that creature as an individual thereafter.

A reaver can sense marked individuals even beyond the limits of its field. It can feel their presence up to a distance of 10 miles, although it is only aware of direction and not precise position. A reavers mark can be removed by *remove curse* or its equivalent. Anyone entering a reaver field for the first time has to save vs spells or be smitten with *The Reavers Bane*: morale and 'to hit' rolls reduced by 2 while enveloped in the field. Failure to save means that a character will always be effected in this way by reavers. Saving means that a character is never so effected. A *remove curse* or its equivalent will negate the effect, but a new saving throw must be made on any subsequent encounter. Going into a reaver field has the same effect as entering the *Negative Material Plane*. See the *DMs Guide* for details.

Characters who enter the reavers field find themselves on what seems to be a flat and featureless plane that stretches away in every direction. The sky is a dull, overcast grey. Characters who step back outside of the field find themselves back at exactly where they first entered even if the field has since moved.

Inside a field, all objects not personal to a character cease to exist. Outside of it they appear again unchanged and unaffected. For this reason missiles fired into the field from outside prove completely ineffectual. Even if encountered in a narrow corridor the inside of a reavers field will always extend fully. Only the power of the pentagram will contain it.

Once within, a character can clearly see the reaver itself, together with any creature already inside. On the *Prime Material Plane* a reaver will normally be encountered riding a nightmare (see *Monster Manual*). The reaver itself appears as a beautiful and well proportioned young woman – the image of youthful beauty. It wears voluminous dark robes, beneath which black mail may occasionally be glimpsed. Its skin is white and its hair, which falls to its waist, is rich and dark. Only its eyes give away its unearthly origins, for they are entirely black. Each wields a +3 morning star. A reaver attacks twice per round.

THE HOUNDS OF THE REAVER

A reaver is almost totally unaware of what lies beyond the limits of its field, being sensitive only to previously marked individuals. To overcome this limitation a reaver is able to animate and summon to itself the corpses of the dead. It will then use those creature's senses as its own over an area a mile in radius.

Each reaver can call to itself 1-10 'hounds'. The summons will be heard over an area a mile in radius. The animation will take 1 turn and the hounds will arrive in 1-12 turns. The recently slain will be summoned in preference to the long dead. DM's should decide randomly how many dead respond and how quickly. If insufficient respond for the reavers needs, it will simply move a mile hence and try again. A reaver can 'summon' at will whilst 'in-field'.

Any hound encountered while responding to the summons can be treated as a standard zombie. [See *MM*.] However, they can only be turned as spectres, avoiding combat and concentrating rather on reaching the reaver. The hounds will collect, waiting till all are gathered, and entering the reavers field together. At this point they undergo a number of changes, becoming true *Hounds of the Reaver*.

Hounds act as if under a permanent *haste* spell – attacking twice per round and moving 12" per turn. However, hounds will 'burn out' after 24 turns, crumbling irrevocably to dust. A reaver does not need to remain passive to affect this domination. It can perform all its other functions even while controlling hounds over a distance. True hounds of the reaver cannot be turned at all. Each reaver controls its own hounds, and if it is destroyed or leaves this plane, all its hounds will drop immediately.

REAVER HUNTING TECHNIQUES

When a hunting pair are sent to the *Prime Material Plane*, the reavers will normally first summon a nightmare. There is a 90% chance that a nightmare will respond and serve until dismissed. This summons can only be made once a day. When satisfactorily established, the reaver will normally rest for 24 hours. This enables it to *gate* itself out, if the need should suddenly arise. Occasionally, a reaver may forgoe this insurance, straightway summoning a pack of hounds and moving to the hunt. This will normally happen when a reaver feels its quarry is particularly weak or when the time factor is of great importance.

When hunting quarry not previously 'marked' the reavers will next split-up and send out hounds to search the immediate area. A reaver may, if hardpressed, question other creatures in its search for the victim. Both Sklavak and Barbatos [see below] may also make use of their psionic abilities in such situations.

When a hound makes contact with a creature which the reaver suspects to be its quarry, its first objective is to force the creature to enter its 'field'. It will go to considerable lengths to achieve this, preferring not to kill until it has been accomplished. The reaver may use its hounds to drive or entrap its victim, or may simply seek to outrun it and ride it down. Once this has been done, the reaver can bring the full force of its abilities to bear. It may go for an immediate kill, if such is its purpose, or it may withdraw, call to its partner and await its arrival before taking action; but always keeping its prey withing the range of its now enlarged senses.

Should a creature find some way of evading the reaver at this point, or if the reaver should be sent to hunt a creature previously 'marked' by it, the reaver will seek it through its own senses rather than through those of its hounds. Hounds will still be summoned however, as reavers prefer to kill through agents whenever possible.

Both reavers and nightmares can travel at their maximum movement rate indefinitely while 'in-field' – however a hunting party will normally travel at the movement rate of its hounds – stopping to summon new hounds when old ones 'burn out' even if this allows their quarry to increase the distance between them. However they may well hunt on without hounds if stopping would mean losing an important victim. Of course they have no choice but to stop if a victim has not previously been 'marked'.

Reavers hunt in an intelligent fashion. They are typically methodical rather than inspired in their approach, checking logical routes first. Remember – their intelligence is exceptional and they are renowned for their patience. They can also respond with flexibility.

THE HIGH REAVERS

The first of the reavers created was Sklavak, The Slayer – High Reaver and Captain General of the Great Hunt. Sklavak differs from most of the reavers in its ability to use psionics, a power possessed while still human. Its psionic ability is 120. Attack/Defence modes A,E/F,G,H. In addition it can exercise the following disciplines: Minor – *Hypnosis, Empathy*. Major – *Energy Control*.

Sklavak is armed with a *Mace of Life Stealing*, (as *Sword of Life Stealing – DM's Guide*, but functions as a +3 weapon). In all other respects Sklavak resembles its brethren.

The second of the reavers created was Barbatos, High Reaver and Master of Hounds. Barbatos differs from its brethren in that, like Sklavak, it is also able to exercise those psionic abilities it possessed in life. Its psionic ability is 80, Attack/Defence Modes A/G,H. In addition it can exercise the following disciplines:
Minor – *Hypnosis, Object Reading*.
Major – *Mass Domination*.
When Barbatos' Major psychic science is used in conjunction with the 'summoning' abilities of his field Barbatos is able to dominate and use as hounds, living creatures, even of monster class. Living creatures so summoned are entitled to saving throws as with the standard psionic discipline; but if they fail the domination will last until released. The individual will not 'burn out', but will age 2 years every turn he or she is dominated. Dominated creatures will act as hounds in *all* respects; the same bonuses and restrictions apply and they will unquestioningly perform even actions contrary to their alignment. Barbatos typically uses living hounds as the vanguard of The Great Hunt. It can of course summon the dead to act as hounds, but not while controlling living ones. Sklavak and Barbatos hunt as a pair when not riding with The Great Hunt.

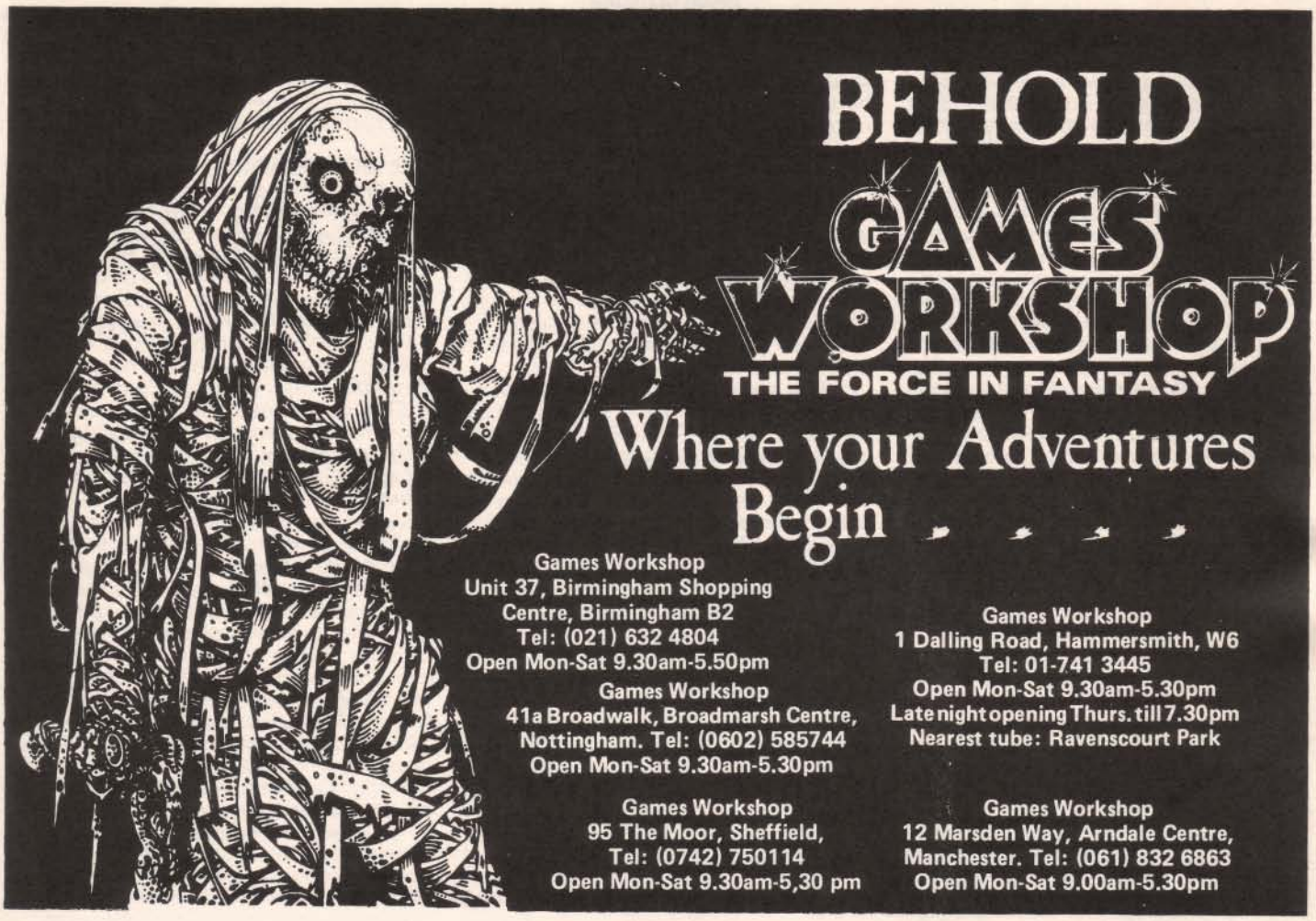
THE LESSER REAVERS

The names of the Lesser Reavers are Vual, Renobe, Lerajie and Glasgalabolas. Vual and Renobe hunt together, as do Lerajie and Glasgalabolas.

THE GREAT HUNT

Frequency:	V Rare
No of Reavers Appearing:	6
No of Nightmares Appearing:	6
No of Hounds Appearing – Living:	0-5
No of Hounds Appearing – Dead:	0-50
Movement with Hounds:	12"
Movement without Hounds – Mounted:	15"/36" (as Nightmare)
Movement without Hounds – On Foot:	12"
Size of Field:	8" Radius

The summons to hounds for The Great Hunt will be heard over a full 6 miles, but hounds may take as long as 60 turns to reach the reavers. Even in The Great Hunt hounds can only be controlled over an area 1 mile in radius, and only by the reaver that summoned them.□



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TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

The last two issues featured some spell tips for magic-using player characters in Treasure Chest. *This issue we continue with some ideas for the ingenious use of some 5th, 6th and 7th level spells.*

Treasure Chest *is a regular department for readers'* AD&D *ideas.*

ARS ARCANA

by Kiel Stephens

Passwall
Ever thought of casting this spell underneath someone (make sure they are standing on solid stone, wood or plaster, not earth), and after they fall in, casting a *dispel magic*? Splat. I'd like to see anyone survive that. Of course if you *slow* them first, they don't even get an action between your casting and dispelling it.

Teleport
Don't travel anywhere without this spell, especially if travelling with someone who has read this article.

Wall Of Force
Talking about a captive audience, ever thought of casting this around an opponent. Unless she/he's got a *disintegrate* spell, she/he is stuck for a while. Meanwhile you can ready lots of nice surprises for him.

Wall Of Iron
A permanent spell, although it does have the problem of being dispellable. You might like to make the floor or ceiling of a room in your abode of this, in a place where any attackers might have to dispel something else, such as a *projected image*, a *fire trap* or a *wizard lock*, and then the floor or ceiling will be dispelled as well, dropping acid onto them, or letting them fall onto poison spikes, etc.

Wall Of Stone
This has similar uses to a *wall of iron* spell, but being of stone, may be noticed less.

Anti-Magic Shell
A magic-user caught in one of these is usually a dead duck, so don't cast it unless you have no alternative.

Disintegrate
A useful spell as it will get rid of anything, even those things that can supposedly only be killed by one set method, such as vampires. It also gets rid of objects. If someone comes at you wearing a *Ring of Spell Turning*, the chances are that she/he would be able to save against a spell, but if you direct the *disintegrate* at the ring, it would almost certainly fail the saving roll, and the spell would not even rebound. This may be very useful, especially if someone charges towards you waving something like a *Vorpal Sword*.

Glassee
The one person version is useful if your referee will allow it to be *permanenced* (the 8th level spell) as you would then be able to sit in a small (10' by 10') room in your abode with no entrances and *glassee* walls, and send a *projected image* out into the adjoining rooms if you need to meet, or combat people in total safety. It pays to be careful when you are getting to this level.

Project Image
An extremely valuable spell. It means that you can see, meet and attack people without having to be there. This is best when cast through a *clairvoyance* spell, or a *crystal ball* (but still within range of the spell), or through transparent walls, so that you can be fairly unreachable.

Reincarnation
Forget it, I mean, who wants to be a Kobold.

Repulsion
Picture a room with a swimming pool full of acid or green slime in the middle, and a 5' wide walkway around the walls, and one corridor out, in the middle of one side of the room. As soon as your opponents step into the corridor, you (or preferably your *projected image*) can step out at the other end, cast your *repulsion* spell, and presto, the party is in the pool. Remember, this spell has no saving throw.

Transmute Rock To Mud
Has similar uses to a *passwall/dispel magic*. Cast this followed by its reverse to have a 'captive' audience.

Charm Plants
A permanent spell that gives you totally loyal guards, an absolute must. Now that there are three official publications containing monsters, there are many plant monsters that can be charmed. One of the best is still the shambling mound, as, if you can spare the time, and the *lightning bolts*, you can increase the hit points of your newly acquired guard. This also keeps your green slime supply under control. Green slime has other uses – carry some in an 'unbreakable' container and put some on a door that is locked, or looks unsafe to open, and the slime will eat it away for you. In a breakable container it can even be used as a missile (only keep the breakable container inside an unbreakable one).

Drawmij's Instant Summons
You may as well cast this on all of your valuable items, just in case they get filched. Even if it doesn't bring the item back it will tell you where it is. If you cast this on an item and give it to someone you will always to able to find him; useful for surveillance.

Duo-Dimension
Although dangerous, this is the only way to be *invisible* and not be detected by a *detect invisibility* spell or by innate percentages due to level. It is also useful for passing through doorways as well, making it good for scouting or thievery.

Phase Door
Has its uses as a way into secret rooms with no other exit (such as the '*glassee* room'). I personally prefer to have my secret rooms with at least 12' thick walls to stop people with *passwalls*, and to *dimension door* into the room.

Reverse Gravity
I've come up with a good trap using this one. Have a room with a very thick, not quite fitting, iron floor, and also on the ceiling held up by easily broken brackets. If a party enter the room, cast the *reverse gravity*, and the following will happen. The mob of hopefuls will first hit the ceiling (3 dice of damage), followed quickly by the floor sliding up under the force of gravity and hitting them (I really hate to think how much damage this will do). This is succeeded by the spell switching off, the floor falling, the party hitting the floor again, and finally by the ceiling (now that the brackets have broken) coming down to squash anything that is still left of the group. This all happens in about 2 seconds, much too short a time for anyone to do anything (spell, psi-power, magic item, etc) at all. Remember to put the floor about 15' from the ceiling so that they are close enough to meet in the time limit.

Vanish
This spell has two major uses, one combative and one defensive, but still destructive. Firstly it can be used in attack so that when you hit someone you can *teleport* them into a room you have previously set up with the ceiling only two feet above the floor, which will have the same effect of *teleporting* low (except on a very short Halfling). Secondly, if you *vanish* the whole inside of a room that you have filled with stone, you will be way over weight limit, and it will be replaced with Ethereal stone, which you can just *disintegrate*. If you don't like someone very much you can just throw in a *dispel magic* while they are in that room, and the rock that you vanished will appear again with no room for your opponent to have any chance of surviving. A subtler, and more artistic way of doing this is to get your enemy to cast the *dispel* himself, by attacking with a *projected image*, or by slowing him, etc.□

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As reviewed in **IMAGINE** 18

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Dear Readers,
Unfortunately several lines were omitted from the scenario, Strikeback [WD58], due to lack of space. The following sources were especially helpful, and are recommended to all readers:
The Holmes/Dracula File by Fred Saberhagen
Brother Berserker by Fred Saberhagen
The Seven Percent Solution by Nicholas Meyer
Time Patrol by Poul Anderson [in Guardians of Time]
Tarzan Alive by Philip Jose Farmer
The Other Log of Phileas Fogg by Philip Jose Farmer
The Assassination Bureau Ltd by Jack London
Illuminati by Steve Jackson Games

The calender used in the future is based on that of the Imperium, in GDW's Traveller. Many thanks to all those who gave advice on this scenario, especially Rory McClaine of Trollcrusher and others at the 1983 Beccon SF convention.
The points cost of superpowers and disadvantages were omitted from the Champions stats; while ther is insufficient room to give a full listing here, the totals for characteristics, powers, and disadvantages for each character should be as follows:

Character	Characteristics	Powers	Disadvantages
Benjy	138	102	140
Holmes	87	63	50
Dracula	164	120	184*
The Monster	145	95	140*
The Machine	304	243	47*

* Includes Villain Bonuses

We apologise to all readers who have been inconvenienced by these errors.

GAMERS IN EXILE

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ENDLESS BEAST

Beast Ents (Tortured Souls) and *Endless Games* (plans) are set to release the first in a series of boxed adventures. The first 'The Halls of the Dwarven Kings', contains, a scenario, floor plans and illustrated players/DM aids and is designed to be used with any system. The second in the series, as yet unnamed is to include *Grenadier Miniatures*. The first release should be available by November and the second by Xmas. *Endless Games* themselves will be releasing a new set of cards including, trees, rivers and fords. It should be out by the time you read this.

NEXT ISSUE

The Bleeding Stone of Iphtath - Games Day's Call of Cthulhu final scenario; *Introduction to Superheroes* - starting adventures in Superhero RPG; *Boarding Stations* - starship anti-boarding defences and tactics; *Eye of Newt: Part II* - more artifact manufacturing; plus an *AD&D* scenario and all the regular features and departments.

CROSSWORD COMPETITION

The winner was Mr T Everson of Wimbledon, who will receive a £10 Games Workshop gift voucher. The answers were:

Across: 1. Stairs; 4. Exorcise; 9. Locate; 10. Brownies; 12. Creation; 13. Orc Den; 14. Styx; 15. Wolverine; 18. Excalibur; 19. Drow; 23. Djinni; 25. Demonist; 27. Reindeer; 28. Master; 29. Demigods; 30. Astral
Down: 2. Alchemy; 3. Ratite; 5. Xorn; 6. Rewarded; 7. Iliad; 8. Essence; 9. Lichs; 11. Cobwebs; 16. Lurker; 17. Blinkdogs; 18. Endured; 20. Reinter; 21. Water; 22. Nomads; 24. Idiom; 26. Mead.

If anyone wants to send in a crossword for us to publish, send it to: White Dwarf, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10.

GAMES DAY '84

Photos from top to bottom:

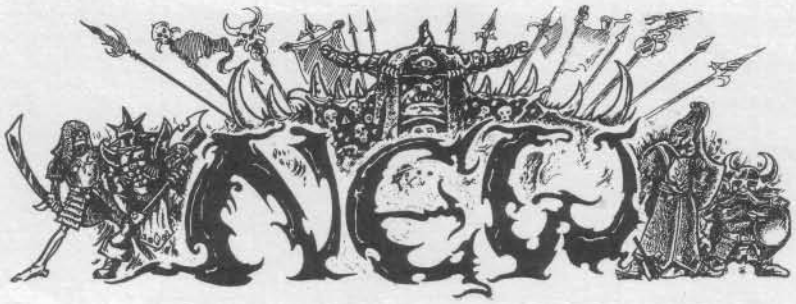
John Stallard and Bryan Ansell of Citadel *fending off marauding creatures of chaos.*

Albie Fiore demonstrating the disadvantages of being turned into a toad in a Talisman *game.*

Jon Sutherland and Steve Williams (to the rear of the photo) pinpointing the Shoggoth in the CoC *final.*

Gary Brennan, Gareth Hill and Jervis Johnson in an expectant mood in the bar after Games Day.

GOBBLEDIGOOK



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HELP!

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Help! Reliable *AD&D* players in Dudley area wanted. 3-4 people willing to hold occasional meetings at their homes on loose rota basis. Ages 18-24 preferred. Contact: Nigel Espley, 26 Claydon Road, Wall Heath, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 0HR. Telephone: Kingswinford 292271.

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No Address! Can the person who sent R Whatmore a cheque for £23.82 please contact him as soon as possible so that his order can be despatched since both name and address were missing.

Rayleigh/Southend. Moderately experienced, serious *AD&D* player/DM seeks equals in Rayleigh/Southend area for regular gaming sessions in *AD&D* and possibly other RPGs. Must be 13 years +. Contact Simon (after 6pm) on: Southend 202247.

It would be clobberin' time but... Superhero role-playing fanzine in dire need of artists. Articles on any superhero system also welcomed. Please contact: Andrew de Salis, 1 Church Street, St George, Nr Abergele, Clwyd.

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Help! Inexperienced 13-yr old *D&D/T&T* learner looking for partner(s). Any sex around own age in Reading area. Will learn other RPGs. Contact: Marcus, 38 Bedford Road, Reading, Berks RG1 7HS, or phone: Reading 597065.

East London. Players wanted for ongoing *AD&D* campaigns in Forest Gate and Leytonstone. Most weekends, Friday night to Sunday night (stay overnight) and some weekdays. Competitive figure painting service also. Phone Paul on: (01) 539 8651.

Sheffield - Out of this world? Is there a club in Sheffield which plays *Star Frontiers/Gamma World* and would be willing to take on a new player? Write to: Mark Hides, 240 Jenkin Road, Brightside, Sheffield S9 1AW.

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Needed. Serious-minded *AD&D* players interested in realism (role-playing) and willing to play under improved rules required for group (15+), Saffron Walden area. Simon Fearnhamm, Belmont House, Newport, Essex. Tel: (0799) 40622.

A quiet spell in life. Are there any old sorcerers out there looking for an apprentice? Inexperienced players looking for experienced players/GMs. Interested? If so, contact Gareth on: Caerphilly (0222) 884525.

Fareham. 17-year old *AD&D/Traveller* in Fareham area seeks out adventurers who like to play regularly on a long term basis. Ring Ian on: Stubbington 662876 (any day around 6), or write to: 28 Martin Ave, Stubbington, Fareham.

AD&D Brighton. 24-yr old DM/player seeks others in local area for regular meeting. Experience not necessary. Contact: Ross Wakley, Fl 2 Lyndhurst Court, Lyndhurst Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 6FZ. Tel: (0273) 726896 after 7pm.

RPG Southwell. Enthusiastic group seeks new members. Either sex, 14+, experience not essential, but reliability is; players or referees. Play *D&D* and *CW*, want to play *Cthulhu, Diplomacy* and others. Ring Graham: (0636) 812890 after 6.30.

Utter Loony. Male *AD&D* player (15) wants penpal (English or French) who is into good music (Queen and ACDC), computers and chaotic dwarves who collect knee-caps. Contact: J Hildred, Post Office, Sutterton, Boston, Lincs PE20 2JQ.

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Help! Anyone in the Alford area interested in forming a RPG club, especially *AD&D*, or is there already one I don't know about? Contact: I Turner, Gilroes, Trusthorpe Road, Sutton-on-Sea. Tel: (0521) 41245.

Broadstairs. Experienced RPGer and *Call of Cthulhu* player seeks players to set up club in Broadstairs area, age 12+. Contact Steven: Thanet 63717.

Barnsley. 19-yr old student looking for either a club or a group that could show me how to play *AD&D*. Contact: Richard Martin, 3 Richard Avenue, Smithies, Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

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Peterborough. 18-yr old male, complete novice, seeks club or players of FRPGs in the Peterborough area. I have *T&T* and am willing to learn *any* other games. Write pronto to: R Gosling, 5 Fallowfield, Orton Wistow, Peterborough, Cambs PE2 0UR.

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Cleveland. Are there any clubs or persons in the Loftus or East Cleveland area interested in RPG. I play *RQ* and *Gamma World* and wish to make contacts. A Williamson, 74 Sycamore Walk, Loftus, Cleveland. Tel: 43604.

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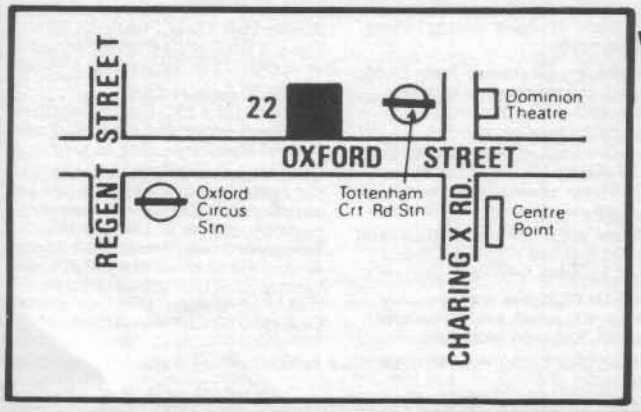

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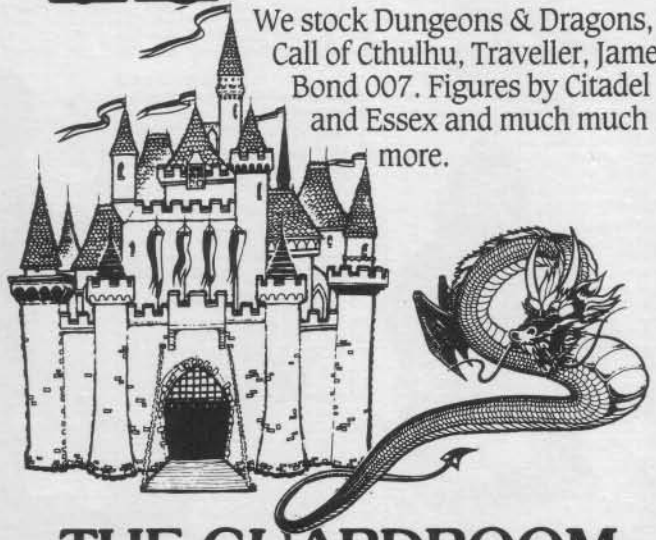

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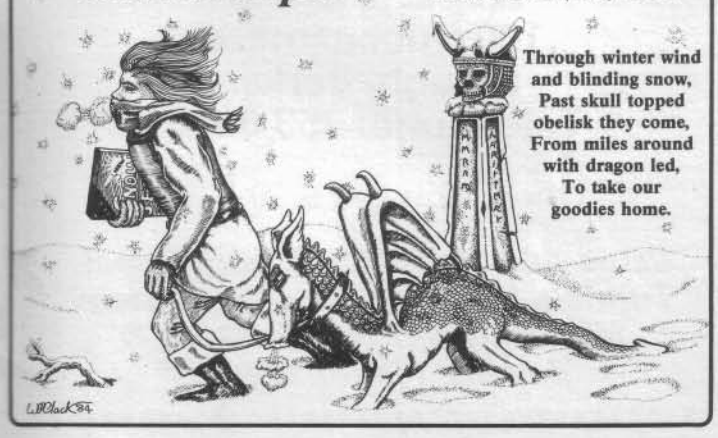

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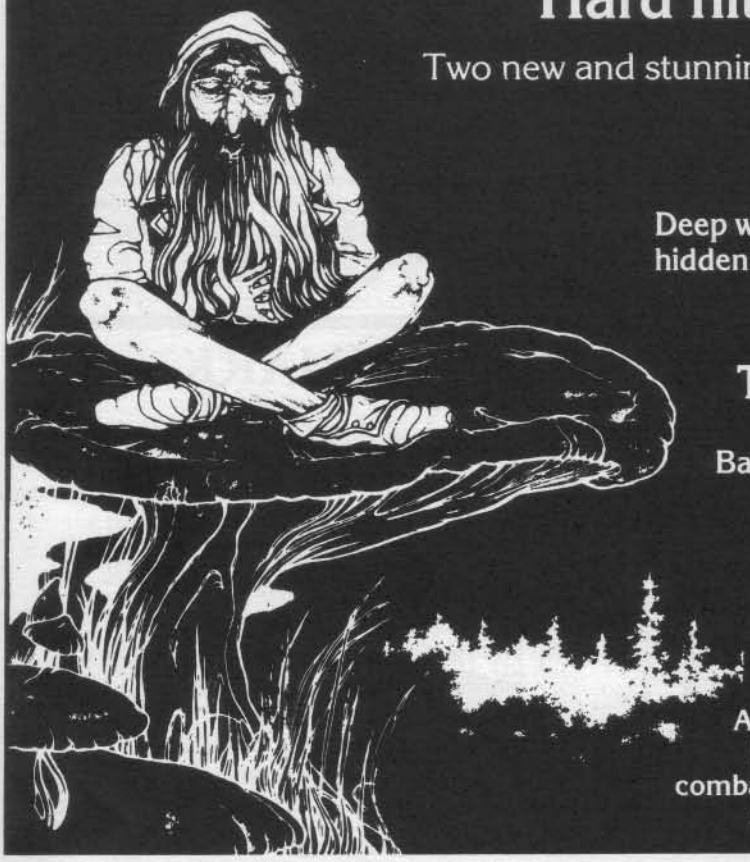

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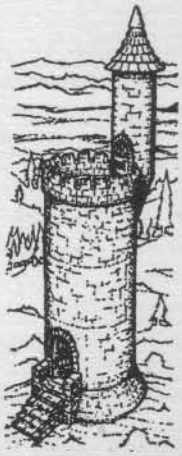

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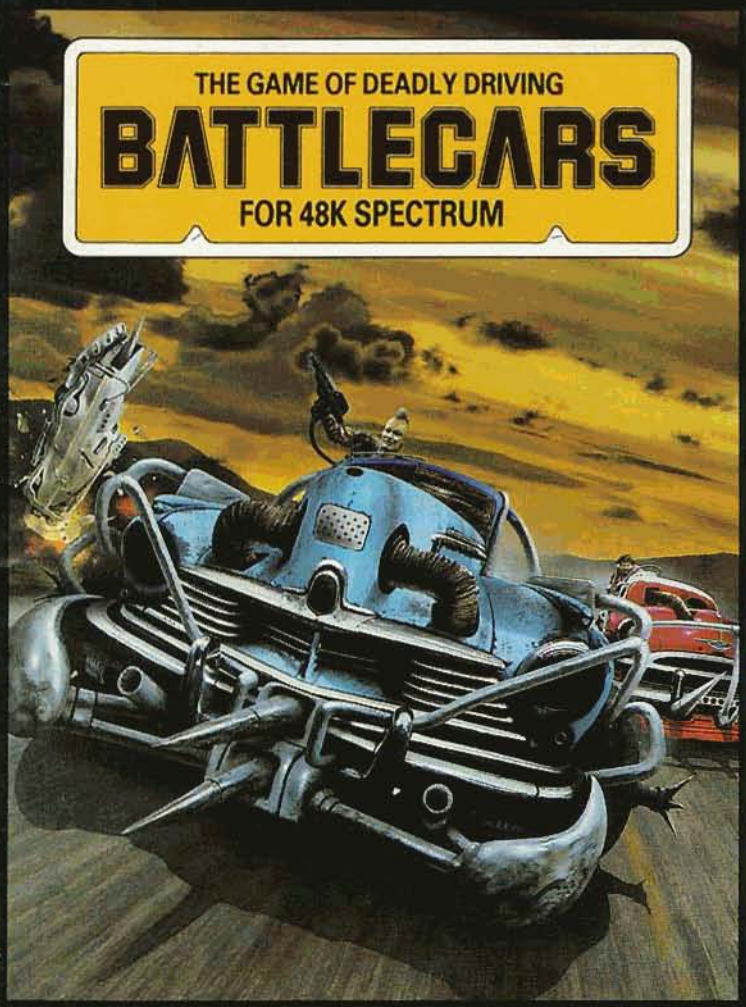

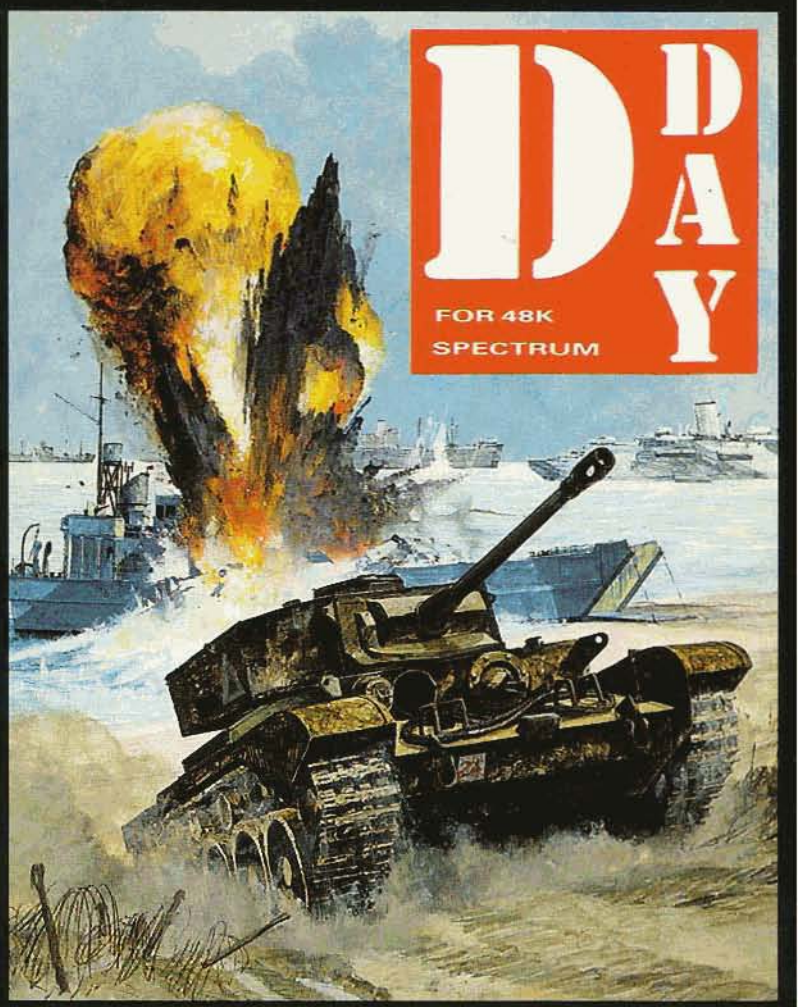

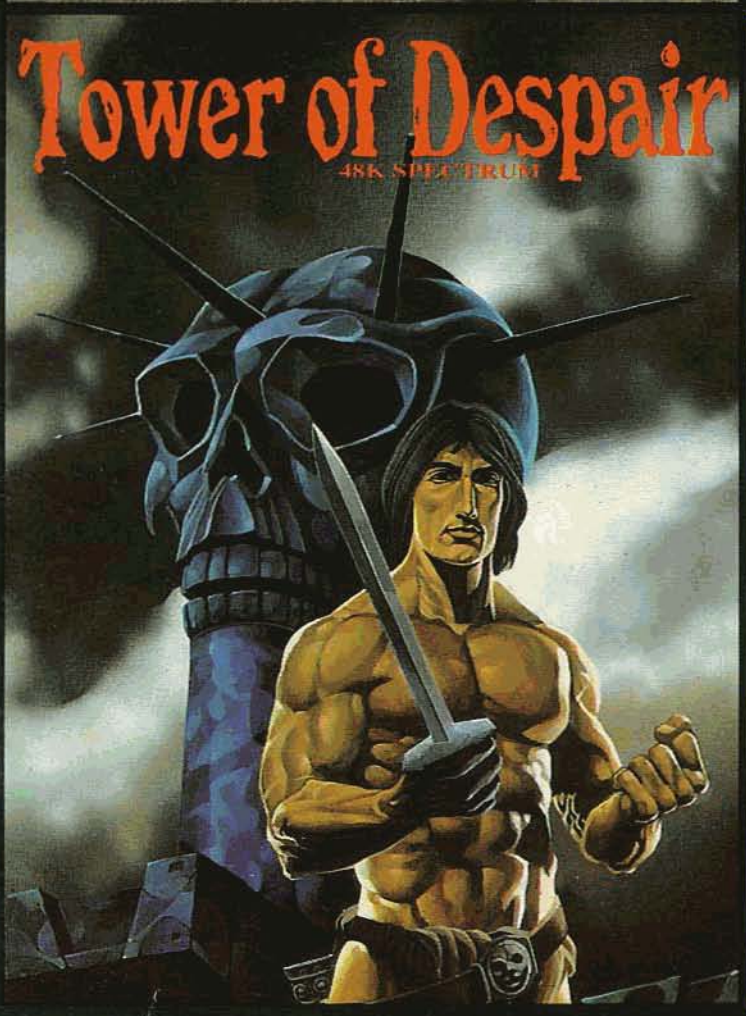

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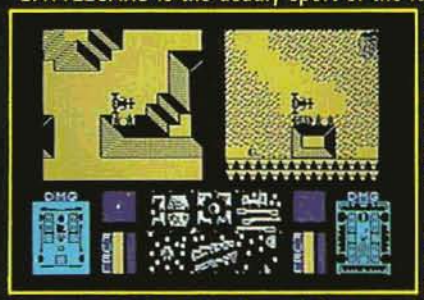

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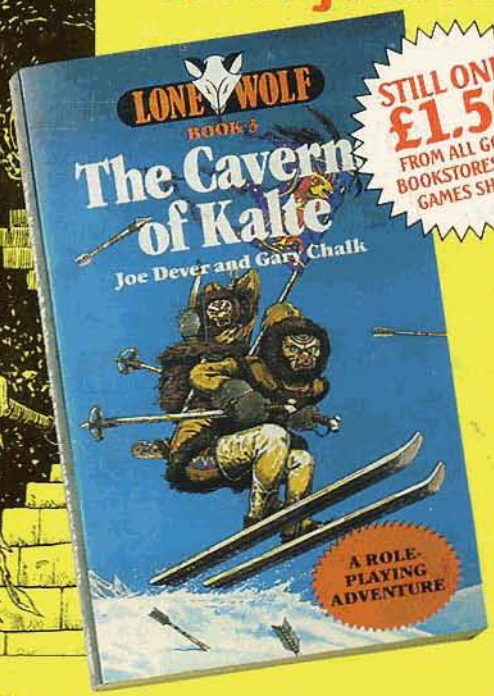

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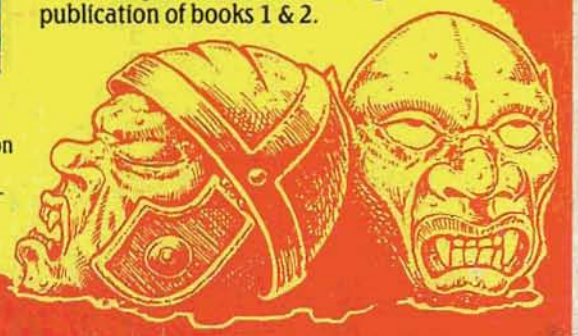

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